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FROM THE EDITOR

As the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns, slated for May 30-June 1 in Budapest, approaches, the excitement and anticipation mount. The Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center will be represented by a ten-person delegation. All of us have a command of one or more Slavic languages and thus will be able to circulate among the crowd and to participate actively in the proceedings.

A plenary session will open the congress, at which Hungarian government officials will greet the various delegations from Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, the United States, and Yugoslavia. The heads of the six groups, as well as the chair of the World Congress, Vasyl' Turok, will offer reports on activity since the last congress which was held in Ruski Krstur, Yugoslavia, May 26-28, 1995. The delegates will then divide up into at least three commissions—economic development, culture, and scholarship—make short presentations, and engage in discussion. Performances by the Duchnovyč Theater from Prešov and a new Rusyn folk ensemble from Hungary will fill the evenings. Then there is the beautiful and elegant old city of Budapest on the Danube River, where we anticipate a warm welcome not only by our Hungarian-Rusyn hosts, but also by the Hungarian government which has been so graciously supportive of its Rusyn minority.

And herein lies a great irony, which is strongly illustrated by the articles in this issue of the *C-RA*. The Hungarians, who for hundreds of years before World War I were masters of the Rusyns and Rusyn-inhabited lands, have been generous toward Rusyns in the post-Communist era. But not so our own close kin, the Ukrainians of Ukraine, with whom we share ancient common Slavic roots. Where the Hungarians have encouraged their Rusyn citizens to revive their native culture, and have, for instance, purchased Rusyn-language texts published in Slovakia for the use of Hungarian-Rusyn schoolchildren, the government of Ukraine and Transcarpathia continue to deny the existence of Rusyns. Certainly, there have been problems for Rusyns in Slovakia and Poland now and then, but despite these problems Rusyns have made advances, at times even with the help of the governments of those two countries. Not so in Transcarpathia.

In fact, as one of our writers in this issue suggests, one cannot avoid seeing certain parallels between the behavior and policies of today's Ukrainian government toward Rusyns and the policies of the former Stalinist Soviet Union toward Ukrainians.

If there was one thing which the Stalinist Soviet government could not abide, it was any grassroots movement or initiative arising from the people themselves. All aspects of society were determined by those in power. Resistance on the part of the people was met with indifference and harsh reprisals. One need only recall peasant resistance to Stalin's forced collectivization of agriculture at the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s, most of which incidentally took place in Ukraine. When peasants resisted collectivization, Stalin ignored their concerns and imposed a requisitioning of grain. He subsequently ignored the resulting famine that claimed the lives of millions and continued to export grain abroad in exchange for hard currency to support his massive industrialization program. The basic principle? Ignore the reality, ignore the people's concerns and suffering, and at all costs force a solution according to some official doctrine. No matter if the doctrine contradicts reality.

The Ukrainian government, operating in a Stalinist mode, continues to ignore the results of the 1991 referendum in which a 78 percent majority of citizens in Transcarpathia voted for autonomy within Ukraine—not for secession from Ukraine. And in this mode, the government desires to wreak vengeance on the perpetrators of the "crime" of Rusynness by decreeing that the reality which those perpetrators know so well and love—their identity as Rusyns—is not real, not legitimate, and is even criminal.

Further reminiscent of Stalinist times in today's Ukrainian attitude toward Rusyns are the unintentional contradictions lurking in every corner of the official government policies, contradictions which betray the truth of the situation. Take the ten measures outlined in our article, STALINISM OR TSARISM IN PRESENT-DAY UKRAINE. These measures are the recommendations of various government ministries and departments on how to solve the "Rusyn problem." Point Two, for instance, suggests implementing "a series of measures to strengthen the Ukrainianness of Transcarpathia (in terms of language, culture, choice of personnel, etc.)." But surely, we ask, is this not a contradiction? If Transcarpathia is already Ukrainian, as they claim, why should it be necessary to teach the people how to be Ukrainians? Why should it be necessary to ukrainianize—in terms of language and culture—a people who are already Ukrainian?

Point Three forbids any referendum on self-identity, such as was part of the 1991 referendum. It recognizes that there persists in Transcarpathia an "old and still vibrant tradition among the people of calling themselves Rusyn." But surely, if the citizens of Transcarpathia are already Ukrainians, then why after all these years are they still referring to themselves as Rusyns and have even formed Rusyn-oriented organizations?

The reality, of course, is that if a government has to "ukrainianize" some of its citizens, it is because they are not in fact Ukrainians. If a government has to forbid any discussion of self-identity, it is because it fears that the statistics will reveal results contrary to the official policy. But this is not all. Point Ten goes yet further to threaten legal action against those espousing Rusyn identity who "can be found to violate the provisions of the Law Code of Ukraine dealing with rights of assembly and association," a code open to broad interpretation and thus easily abused by those in power. Stalin's broad interpretation of Soviet law regarding dissenters allowed him to send tens of thousands to their deaths. Alarming also in the midst of all this is the dismal condition of Transcarpathia's economy and the rape of its environment, as Dr. Jevhenij Župan's article describes.

Is it not time for Rusyns in Transcarpathia to be allowed, as citizens of Ukraine, to enjoy the right to have their own identity and to exercise a wiser local control over their own territory? Is it not time for the new democracy of Ukraine to recognize its Rusyn citizens, now that the rest of the world acknowledges Rusyns whose existence will be proclaimed loudly and clearly—and already for the fourth time—at the next World Congress of Rusyns meeting just a short distance from the Ukrainian border?

IVAN HARAJDA (1905-1944)



Like many cultural and civic activists from Subcarpathian Rus' during the first half of the twentieth century, the name of Ivan Harajda was until quite recently virtually unknown. This is because the new Soviet rulers who annexed the region in 1945 deliberately set out to expunge from the historical record all persons who were not Communists or who, they believed, were somehow opposed to the Soviet Union. Since the fall of Communism in 1989-1991, the name of Harajda is being mentioned in some circles once again as the author of a Rusyn-language grammar which some people praise and others denegrate as inappropriate for the inhabitants of Ukraine's Transcarpathia. Thus, even in death Harajda's name and memory are being used and misused because of the needs of contemporary politics.

Ivan Harajda's entire, if relatively short, life was fashioned largely by political events well beyond his control. He was born in 1905 in the Carpatho-Rusyn village of Zaričovo, which at the time was within Ung/Už county of the former Hungarian Kingdom. He came from a family of elementary school teachers that included his maternal grandfather, Ivan Torma, and his father, Andrej Harajda, principal of the school in Zaričovo.

When World War I ended and Subcarpathian Rus' became part of Czechoslovakia, Harajda's father refused to swear an oath of loyalty to the new state. As a result, the young Ivan was packed off with the family to resettle in Székesfehérvár, not far from Lake Balaton in postwar west-central Hungary. After finishing high school in that town, Ivan graduated from the law faculty of the University of Budapest (1928). Two years later he was awarded from Poland a fellowship at Jagiellonian University in Cracow where he eventually received a master's degree in history (1934). Harajda decided to remain in Poland and became an assistant professor at Jagiellonian University where he taught the Hungarian language.

When World War II broke out in September 1939 and Nazi Germany destroyed Poland, Harajda, like most other Jagiellonian University professors, was arrested by the German secret police (Gestapo) and interned in Germany at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The Hungarian embassy in Berlin eventually arranged for his release, and in May 1940 he was allowed to return to his parent's home in Hungary.

In the meantime, Czechoslovakia had fallen and Subcarpathian Rus' was reannexed to Hungary. The new regime set up a Subcarpathian Academy of Sciences (Podkarpatskoe obščestvo nauk) in Užhorod, and in 1941 Harajda was invited to return to the land of his birth to become the institution's director. The young, unmarried historian and language teacher was about to apply his scholarly and his yet unkown organizational skills with what turned out to be great success.

During the next four years, as war raged throughout much of Europe, the Subcarpathian Academy published a monthly journal of cultural and civic affairs (*Literaturna nedîlja*), a scholarly journal (*Zorja/Hajnal*), a children's journal (*Rus'ka* molodež), an annual almanac (*Kalendar*), and several series of books that included literary works (30 volumes), children's books (11 volumes), and scholarly studies (40 volumes). All were edited by Ivan Harajda and all were published in the Rusyn language. Aside from such editorial work, Harajda also published the results of his own scholarship in medieval history, linguistics, and perhaps his most outstanding achievement (with Nykolaj Lelekač), the first comprehensive bibliography (1944) of published works about all aspects of Subcarpathian Rus' and Rusyn culture.

It was in the field of the Rusyn language, however, that Harajda was to become best known at the time and eventually remembered. In 1941, he published a grammar of the Rusyn language (*Hrammatyka rus'koho jazŷka*), which was adopted by the school system in Hungarian-ruled Subcarpathian Rus'. During the previous twenty years of Czechoslovak rule, the Subcarpathian "language question" remained unresolved, and Russian, Rusyn, and Ukrainian were all taught in local schools. Now, Rusyn according to Harajda's grammar was considered the official regional language alongside Hungarian. As a result, a whole generation of young people in Subcarpathian Rus' came to realize that their Rusyn language was worthy of being taught in schools and for use in publications of all kinds, from children's books to scholarly treatises.

The "Rusyn era" in the cultural history of Subcarpathian Rus' was to be short-lived, however. In the autumn of 1944, World War II was coming to a close and the Soviet Army had reached Subcarpathia. Within a few weeks, the Soviet secret police (the NKVD and its SMERSH unit) began rounding up all who had worked with or under the Hungarian regime. Harajda was arrested and interrogated, but before sentencing he died of a heart attack after a month of imprisonment in December 1944. His relatives were denied their request for a Christian burial and the place of Harajda's earthly remains are unknown to this day.

Harajda's work on behalf of Rusyn culture was deliberately forgotten until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since then his memory has been "resurrected," although it has become a source of controversy. Local Rusyns argue his work proved that Rusyn was a viable language and that his grammar should serve as the basis for a new literary standard; local Ukrainians also have begun to praise his achievements during World War II at the Subcarpathian Academy of Sciences, but they single out as an exception his "odious grammar." Thus, in death as in life, Ivan Harajda is still being tossed about by the political agendas of others.

Philip Michaels

STALINISM OR TSARISM IN PRESENT-DAY UKRAINE

On December 1, 1991, the citizens of Ukraine were asked to vote in a referendum and to choose whether or not they wanted an independent state. More than 90 percent voted yes. That same day, and as part of the same referendum, the citizens of one region of Ukraine, called Transcarpathia, were asked whether or not they wanted "self-governing status" (autonomy) for their region. Over 78 percent voted yes.

Six years later Ukraine has its independence, but Transcarpathia has not been granted autonomy. Moreover, the government of independent Ukraine has refused to recognize the will of 78 percent of Transcarpathian voters and seems ready to accept the recent recommendations of its ministries of foreign affairs and of justice that "autonomy for Transcarpathia, whether on cultural, ethnic, or administrative territorial grounds ... has no hope of being realized."

If refusing to grant autonomy were not enough, Ukraine's government also refuses to recognize that a percentage of the indigenous East Slavic inhabitants of Transcarpathia wishes to identify as Rusyn, which they understand to be a nationality distinct from Ukrainian. The refusal to recognize the right of individuals to identify themselves as they wish is in violation of agreements signed by Ukraine as part of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: that "to belong to a national minority is a matter of a person's individual choice"; and that "persons belonging to national minorities can exercise and enjoy their rights individually as well as in community with other members of their group," including "persons across frontiers with whom they share a common ethnic or national origin." (CSCE meetings in Copenhagen 1990 and Geneva 1991).

But why should the United States and other democratic countries be concerned with Ukraine's conduct toward some of its citizens? This is quite simply because since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine has become a key element for stability in Europe. Of all the countries of the former Soviet Union, Ukraine receives the most foreign aid from the United States. In fact, Ukraine is today the third largest recipient of American foreign aid of all countries in the world.

American foreign policy makers have justified their support of Ukraine on the following grounds. To avoid political instability and to assure independence for former Soviet countries, massive foreign aid is needed to stabilize the economies of the region's new states. Ukraine, moreover, has fulfilled a basic condition of American support by adopting a democratic constitution and by guaranteeing for the most part human rights for its citizens.

There is an one glaring exception, however, to Ukraine's otherwise admirable record. That exception is the far western (oblast) of Ukraine called Transcarpathia, which borders on Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Poland. It was not until 1945 that Ukraine acquired Transcarpathia, when Stalin convinced Czechoslovakia to cede the region to the Soviet Union. Formerly known as Subcarpathian Rus', Transcarpathia enjoyed autonomous status under Czechoslovakia between 1919 and 1939. That autonomy had been guaranteed by international provisions agreed to at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919-1920. Even Hungary, which tried to hold on to the region in 1918 and then reannexed it in 1939, acknowledged that the tradition of political autonomy for the region had somehow to be addressed.

After the Soviet Union annexed the province in 1945, all considerations for autonomy were banned. To help justify its new territorial acquisition, the Soviet authorities simply declared that the indigenous East Slavic inhabitants were Ukrainian, whether or not the people themselves believed this to be the case. Ukrainians, both non-Communist and Communist, agreed with the Soviet viewpoint. Hence, for nearly the next half century, the Rusyn nationality was banned in Soviet Transcarpathia as well as in neighboring, Soviet-influenced Communist Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, and Hungary, where Rusyns also lived.

With the freedom that became possible in the wake of the Revolution of 1989 and the fall of the Soviet Union, a certain number of people who for over four decades were officially declared to be Ukrainian reasserted their Rusyn national identity. Organizations to promote this idea sprang up between 1989 and 1991 in Ukraine's Transcarpathia, as well as in neighboring Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia (where a Rusyn nationality was never banned). In Slovakia, the former Czechoslovak federal government even recognized the Rusyn nationality in its census of 1991, and Poland and Hungary followed suit by listing Rusyns, or Lemko-Rusyns, as a distinct group in its new laws concerning national minorities.

Aside from demands to recognize the Rusyn nationality, activists in Ukraine's Transcarpathia also called for the renewal of their region's historic autonomous status. In 1990-1991, a special commission appointed by the Transcarpathian Regional Assembly (Oblastna Rada) recommended a concrete plan for autonomy, and in November 1991, then chairman of the National Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) and Ukraine's first democratically-elected president, Leonid Kravchuk, himself proposed the text of a question on "self-governing status" for the referendum in Transcarpathia. He even expected that autonomy would be implemented within a few months after the December 1 referendum.

When this did not happen, President Kravchuk blamed Ukraine's Parliament for stalling on Transcarpathian autonomy. There were even plans to create a "free economic zone"

in Transcarpathia as a way to get around "political" autonomy. When the central government refused to move on any aspect of autonomy, and when the Transcarpathian Regional Assembly dropped its own previous demands for autonomy, local Rusyn activists decided to keep the issue alive by declaring the existence of a Provisional Government of the Autonomous Republic of Subcarpathian Rus'. Headed by Professor Ivan Turianytsia, a deputy to the Transcarpathian Regional Assembly, the Provisional Government wishes to restore the region's autonomous status, but within the framework of Ukraine. It is important to remember that the Provisional Government's leaders are not proposing to secede from Ukraine, despite the accusations of separatism levelled against them by their political enemies.

The government of Ukraine has not been moved by the calls for Transcarpathian autonomy and recognition of a distinct Rusyn nationality within its borders. Instead, it has ignored the 1991 referendum with its 78 percent majority in favor of autonomy and has adopted in 1996 a constitution that provides for a unitary state. In October 1996, just a few months after the new constitution was ratified by the country's parliament, the government of Ukraine commissioned its ministries and governmental departments to provide recommendations on how to resolve what it calls the "problem of Ukrainian-Rusyns." The result is a list of ten "proposed measures" from various ministries and governmental institutions to be implemented immediately or on an on-going basis (see the text below).

The "proposed measures" clearly recall Stalinist times. Regardless of what Rusyns may believe about their identity, and whether they live within the borders of Ukraine (Transcarpathia) or in neighboring countries, the document begins from the premise that there is no such thing as a Rusyn nationality. According to Ukraine, all Rusyns are Ukrainians. Nor should the government of Ukraine only be concerned with "the Rusyn problem" within its own borders. It should also interfere in the affairs of neighboring states (Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia) by supporting local pro-Ukrainians in those countries in their struggle against Rusyns.

The "proposed measures" deny the basic human right to identify oneself as one wishes, they reject the will of a clear majority (78 percent) of voters in favor of autonomy, and they call for interference in the internal affairs of neighboring states. As such, they clearly reflect a Stalinist mode of thinking and political action, and have nothing to do with the principles of democracy that are struggling to be implemented throughout post-Communist Europe on the eve of the twenty-first century.

Alas, the Ukrainian attitude toward Rusyns recalls an even earlier time, the era of harsh tsarist Russian rule over Ukraine. This was a time when Russians denied that Ukrainians existed as a distinct nationality and subordinated them to being nothing more than a regional group that they called "Little Russians." Now that Ukraine is an independent state, it has created its own subordinate people, "Little Ukrainians," by denying that Rusyns exist as a distinct nationality and instead referring to them as "Ukrainian-Rusyns."

There is no reason why Rusyns cannot function in their native region as a distinct nationality loyal to the state of Ukraine and to enjoy the same rights accorded to other national minorities in Ukraine, such as Russians, Poles, Jews, Crimean Tatars, Germans, etc. Instead, Ukraine has chosen to deny Rusyns their basic human right to self-identity in their own homeland.

The sad irony is that Ukrainians are treating others as they had once been treated. This is something that even an investigative reporter from L'viv, the center of Ukrainian nationalism, was forced to admit (Andrii Kviatkovskyi in *Post-postup,* 1992):

> Let's recall our own history. The 'creeping steps of Russification' during the 18th and early 19th centuries led to a kind of success, but following the Ems Ukase [1876] and Valuev circular [1863] with their statements [that the Ukrainian language] "never existed, does not exist, and cannot exist," the result was a counter-reaction that in fact led to a new wave of the Ukrainian national revival...
>
> And how dangerous is the Rusyn movement for the idea of a united Ukraine? ...
>
> And does the Rusyn movement have a future? Yes, it does, and first of all because it is reacting to the Ukrainian position that a 'Rusyn language and culture has not existed, does not exist, and cannot exist.' How can one explain such a thesis to an ordinary Transcarpathian when Rusyn newspapers, journals, elementary schools, and *gymnasia* do exist in Yugoslavia ... and when such institutions ... are today coming into being in Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland? And who created the World Congress of Rusyns, if not the Rusyns themselves? I realize that all these are not very pleasant things for sympathizers of a united Ukraine. And for me they are not pleasant either. But we cannot be ostriches and try to hide from such realities by sticking our heads in the sand!

Julian Galloway

PROPOSED MEASURES FOR RESOLVING THE PROBLEM OF UKRAINIAN-RUSYNS

1.

Clearly define and declare, on the basis of the Constitution of Ukraine, in particular paragraph 2, the position of the Ukrainian state concerning all ideas of separation or autonomy for Transcarpathia, whether on cultural, ethnic, or administrative-territorial grounds, since none of the above has any hope of being realized. Charge the embassies of Ukraine in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland with the task of organizing a series of publications in the languages of each of those countries that explains the position of Ukraine regarding the Rusyn question. Guarantee the embassies of Ukraine in each of the above-named countries all necessary means to produce and distribute such material. (For implementation in 1996).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Justice, National Academy of Sciences

2.

Implement a series of measures designed to strengthen the Ukrainianness of Transcarpathia (in terms of language, culture, choice of personnel, etc.) and to integrate the region's inhabitants in the socio-political and religious-cultural framework of Ukraine. Create a government interdepartmental working group to coordinate the activity of various ministries and governmental departments with regard to carrying out the above measures. (For implementation in 1996-1997).

Ministry of Culture and the Arts
Ministry of Education
Transcarpathian Oblast State Administration

3.

Prevent holding any local referendums whose goals are to determine the "self-identity" of the Ukrainians of Transcarpathia; that is, whether they are Rusyns or Ukrainians. In the first place, on scholarly grounds such a question is in principle an incorrect one. Secondly, the existence of an old and still vibrant tradition among the people of calling themselves "Rusyns" could influence the outcome of such questionnaires and color subsequent political interpretations of the results. For instance, a similar questionnaire in eastern Slovakia provided a so-called "legal basis" for recognizing the Rusyns of Slovakia as a distinct nationality. (For implementation on an on-going basis).

Transcarpathian Oblast State Administration

4.

Create a permanent government interdepartmental working group to coordinate the study of the Rusyn problem. (For implementation in 1996).

National Academy of Sciences
Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture and the Arts
State Committee for National Minorities and Migration

5.

Establish a scholarly commission and introduce the necessary precise definitions for the planned enumeration of nationalities and languages [in Ukraine]. The object is to work out a final variant of an official List of Nationalities and Languages in Ukraine. (For implementation in 1996).

National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Statistics

6.

Prepare for the public at large scholarly works that explain the ethnic linguistic, cultural, and political aspects of the history of the Ukrainian-Rusyns of Transcarpathia as an integral part of the history of the Ukrainian people. (For implementation in 1996-1997).

National Academy of Sciences
Ministry of Education

7.

Make use of the authority vested in the local self-governing administration according to paragraph 11 of the Constitution of Ukraine as well as by the state law "On the Principles of Local Self-Government in Ukraine" (after its passage by Ukraine's National Parliament), in order to resolve the linguistic and cultural problem in the region within the framework of the self-governing bodies in the Transcarpathian oblast. (For implementation on an on-going basis).

Local Self-governing Administrative Bodies
in the Transcarpathian Oblast
Transcarpathian Oblast State Administration

8.

Implement a series of measures for the ideological, material, personnel, and cultural support of Ukrainian communities in eastern Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Poland by each of the undersigned governmental bodies. (For implementation in 1996-1997).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
State Committee for National Minorities and Migration
Ministry of Culture and the Arts
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Information
Society for Relations with Ukrainians Abroad

9.

Distribute widely through the mass media materials about Transcarpathia, emphasizing the fact that this region is an age-old Ukrainian land, and that the local Ukrainians are an indelible part of the Ukrainian nation. (For implementation in 1996-1997).

Ministry of Information
State Commission for Television and Radio Broadcasting

10.

Undertake clearly defined and preventative work with leaders and activists of the "political Rusynism" movement, with the goal to avert the spread of their influence and their ability to create political structures with clearly defined separatist goals. Apply to members of the unregistered regional branch of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns, and the "provisional government" which it has created, the appropriate norms of the existing administrative and criminal law code (paragraphs 187-188 of the criminal code of Ukraine). Apply administrative measures against activists in the registered branches of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns (in the towns of Užhorod, Mukačevo, Svaljava) in those cases where they can be found to violate the provisions of the Law Code of Ukraine dealing with rights of assembly and association. (For implementation on an on-going basis).

Office of the General Prosecutor
Ministry of Internal Affairs
Transcarpathian Oblast State Administration

THE HUMANITARIAN AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION IN SUBCARPATHIAN RUS' TODAY

The following remarks were delivered by Jevhenij Župan at an international conference, "Subcarpathian Rus' in Europe," that was held in Prague in October 1996. A medical doctor by profession, Župan also serves since 1994 as a deputy in Transcarpathia's Regional Assembly (Oblastna Rada), where he has frequently spoken out on behalf of the cultural and political aspirations of Carpatho-Rusyns in Ukraine. The translation from the Rusyn original was done by Paul Robert Magocsi.— Editor

Rusyns, who number about 800,000 out of a total population of 1.3 million, represent the predominant portion of the indigenous inhabitants of our region of Subcarpathian Rus'/Transcarpathia. Aside from Rusyns, our region also includes Magyars, Germans, Ukrainians, Russians, Romanians, Czechs, and Slovaks among others. The Rusyns, who are one of the oldest Slavic peoples, have shared with the world their culture, rich language, and distinct traditions and customs. Several of our outstanding leaders have together with other Slavic activists made important contributions in science and culture.

At the very outset, I wish to note that until the end of World War II we were considered and functioned as Rusyns in our own homeland. After 1919, we were according to international law part of an autonomous entity called Subcarpathian Rus' within Czechoslovakia. By 1938, Subcarpathian Rus' received wide-ranging autonomy with its own government and ministers. After 1944, following the arrival on our territory of Soviet troops, it was in their presence that the so-called Council of People's Committees was formed. Following Stalin's instructions, that council called for the unification of Subcarpathian Rus', which at the time was called Transcarpathian Ukraine, to the Soviet Ukraine. Even under such circumstances, Subcarpathian Rus' was annexed as a distinct state entity which later, in 1946, the Soviet Ukraine abolished and transformed into the Transcarpathian region (oblast).

The treaty that transferred Subcarpathian Rus' to the Soviet Union was signed by Zdeněk Fierlinger, Czechoslovakia's ambassador to the Soviet Union, and by Vjačeslav Molotov, Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, without the agreement of our government and in the absence of a popular referendum. This was in violation of international law. At the same time, the prewar governmental leaders of Subcarpathian Rus' headed by Prime Minister Avhustyn Vološyn were interned in Stalin's prisons. Moreover, when after the war Soviet identification papers were being issued to each citizen, our nationality was abolished and every Rusyn was administratively declared to be a Ukrainian.

In such a barbaric fashion the Stalinist system liquidated our nationality and our statehood. As Stalin said at the time, if there are no people, there are no problems. In other words, if there are no Rusyns there is no problem of statehood. Since all of us were transformed into Ukrainians, and since all Ukrainians enjoyed Soviet-style sovereignty, why would "Transcarpathian" Ukrainians need any kind of autonomy.

After the fall of the Soviet Union and the formation of newly independent states, Rusyns expected that historical justice would be done and that our nationality and autonomy would be returned to us. In actual practice, in all neighboring states bordering on Ukraine, the rights of Rusyns have since 1989 been recognized; only we Rusyns in Ukraine are not recognized.

On December 1, 1991, at the same time a national referendum was held regarding the independence of Ukraine, in Transcarpathia/Subcarpathian Rus', a question was asked about autonomy (special self-governing status) for Transcarpathia within the context of an independent Ukraine. Seventy-eight percent of the region's inhabitants voted for autonomy. The results of the referendum were then confirmed by our Regional Assembly (Oblastna Rada). Nevertheless, until today the will of the people has been ignored, the referendum's decision has not been implemented, and our special status has not been incorporated into the new constitution of Ukraine.

In 1992, our Regional Assembly recognized the Rusyn nationality and turned to the National Parliament (Verchovna Rada) of Ukraine with the request that it, too, recognize officially our nationality. As result of that request, a "decision" came down that a nationality such as Rusyn does not exist.

We then turned to the Supreme Court of Ukraine regarding the abolition of our statehood in 1946 by the presidium of the National Parliament of [Soviet] Ukraine. The Supreme Court's response was that at present there are no state organs in Ukraine that have the legal competence to decide such matters. Considering the fact that Ukraine has become a member of the Council of Europe and has agreed to abide by that body's democratic principles, we feel obliged to turn to the European council in order to help us attain our legal rights.

It must be said that Rusyns are known for their peace-loving, friendly, industrious, tolerant, and law-abiding characteristics. Despite the fact that several peoples live in our region, Transcarpathia has never experienced any violent acts motivated by national differences. For instance, during the first Czechoslovak republic (1919-1938) our homeland became a refuge for the elite of the Russian and Ukrainian intelligentsias who had fled from the totalitarian regime in their homeland.

It was during the interwar years, when Subcarpathian Rus' was part of Czechoslovakia, that we experienced the best of times. By 1938, our region had 463 elementary schools where the Rusyn language was taught. There were also Czech-, Hungarian-, German-, Russian-, and several Ukrainian-language schools. Even during the war years, 1939-1944, we were able to be educated in our native Rusyn language. And we even had our own Subcarpathian Academy of Sciences which during otherwise difficult times was able to publish the works of our classic authors—Aleksander Duchnovyč, Aleksander Pavlovyč, Aleksander Mitrak, Ivan Sil'vaj, and others.

Today, we wish to attain justice for our people in a peaceful and legal manner. We are neither extremists nor separatists. We wish to have autonomy in order that our region can enjoy its fullest development.

Our region is unique, with its beautiful mountains and valleys, streams and rivers, and its rich natural resources. Older people who have lived through several regimes [Austro-Hungarian, Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Soviet], report that never before was the quality of life so poor and difficult, not even during World War II. The present tragic situation of our people is clearly something we have not seen for centuries.

Since World War II, Transcarpathia, with its generally poor and only limited amount of habitable land (which works out to 0.15 hectares per person), has experienced a relatively high in-migration of people from other parts of Ukraine. The policy of settling people from elsewhere has created in our region a demographic imbalance and social tensions. This is because such conditions threaten the traditional mentality and aspirations of our people to build one's own house and to economize to the fullest in order to have a piece of land and raise some livestock. In that regard, our people have a reputation in many lands as good builders.

The tragedy we now see all around us is difficult to describe. More than 75 percent of our people are out of work, and those who are working often do so without pay. Rates of unemployment are much higher in Transcarpathia than in other parts of Ukraine. Our people, therefore, are forced to look for work abroad [Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic], and not in other parts of Ukraine, where even if there is work it goes unpaid or is paid very poorly. Those who go abroad work 13 to 15 hours every day, without any holidays, doing the most difficult manual labor jobs that are underpaid. They reduce their food intake in order to save some money to bring to their wives and children at home and then again return abroad to undertake serf-like labor. They do not see their families for three to six months at a time, then after one or two weeks at home (too short to do any effective work on their farms), they return abroad to work in conditions that expose them to stomach infections, tuberculosis, and various other traumas and diseases. Besides that, they must hide from the police because they are working illegally.

Others, who are lucky enough to live near the border, try to hide a few cartons of cigarettes which they hope to sell when they go abroad in order to bring back a few dollars to their families. As for those who remain at home to work, they are not in a very envious situation. Aside from the fact that they receive only a miserable few kopecks for their work, they are not even paid that much for four to five months at a time.

In comparison with other parts of Ukraine, our Transcarpathian region has the lowest salaries but the highest prices for goods. Adults simply do not get enough food and some are starving. In terms of calorie intake, we are at the level of the world's least developed countries. For instance, the average daily intake for an inhabitant of Transcarpathia is 700 calories compared to Afghanistan at 1,300 calories, while the minimal level set by the United Nations when it supplies humanitarian aid is 1,700 calories. The situation is particularly difficult for older retirees who, after having given to society several years of hard work, have been repaid with extreme poverty.

Our health care system is in a catastrophic state. We have reached the stage where in hospitals there are not even the basic medicines for external use. Pre-operative rubbing alcohol and injection needles have to be purchased by the medical staff from their own salaries, which in any case they only receive after a four to five month delay.

Behind such statistics is another reality—the presence of people who avoid honest work altogether and who violate the law. Corruption, lawlessness, and crime run rampant. At the same time, the government bureaucracy continues to grow. For instance, the city government of the region's administrative center of Užhorod employed a few years ago 400 persons; now it employs 1,200. The more the bureaucracy's numbers grow, the worse the economic status of our region.

Transcarpathia once again requires a financial subsidy. It is important to note that our region is in fact able to fulfill



properly the income side of our annual budget. In return, however, we receive less than one-third of what we send to the central government in Kiev. Such economic policies are sure to lead to social upheaval. On the one hand, we are told that our region cannot support itself without an external subsidy, while on the other our proposals to the National Parliament for a self-regulating free economic zone are blocked. It is said the Transcarpathians want to live well, but that it is impossible on the basis of the region's own resources.

Where our region's money and natural resources go is unknown, but it certainly does not go toward improving our people's welfare. At present, 1 million tons of rock salt, 1.5 million square meters of lumber, several million bottles of mineral water, as well as marble, zeolite, mercury, gold, and other minerals, not to mention the income derived from the oil and gas pipelines and the international railway lines, all come from our region. We certainly could live well on the income from selling such items and even produce a surplus which we could share with other regions. Instead, the last ounce of energy is demanded from our simple workers in order to support local governing officials and a bureaucracy filled with former Communist-party functionaries. Only 5 to 7 percent of our region's inhabitants live well—the mafia and government officials.

Those same officials conclude agreements with suspect foreign companies who cut down our forests, all the while disregarding the interests of the local inhabitants. Clearly in danger is our stock of white birch trees, the largest in Europe, as well our air, rivers, and underground wells. All are being polluted, which is a threat to natural wealth that belongs not only to us but to all of Europe.

Hence, by demanding the implementation of autonomy for our region, we wish to become the masters and the caretakers of our own land. In calling for the recognition of our nationality as Rusyns—a right accorded by international law to every individual—we are simply demanding our basic human rights in Ukraine. We wish to have schools that teach in our native language, to have Rusyn-language regional television and radio programs, and to obtain support for our beautiful traditions and customs. And we certainly wish to live in peace and harmony with all our neighbors.

We have already collected tens of thousands of signatures on petitions that request recognition for our Rusyn nationality. Yet the Rusyn nationality remains forbidden in Ukraine, where the government refuses to adopt laws which would guarantee an individual's free choice of nationality and which is therefore in violation of international standards.

Today in Subcarpathian Rus'/Transcarpathia, there are a few organizations that represent Rusyn interests. The largest of these is the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns, the Aleksander Duchnovyč Society, and the Organization of Transcarpathia's Indigenous Peoples. The financial situation of these organizations is difficult because of the impoverished state of our people. Besides that there is a general black-out of information about Rusyns within our region. All kinds of obstacles are placed in our path. For instance, on several occasions we turned to the present government of Ukraine with the request to have Rusyn-language programs on regional television, but these requests have been completely ignored. Even in the Regional Assembly our Rusyn deputies are not given the possibility to speak. Despite all these difficulties, we are nonetheless witnessing a rebirth of our culture and traditions. We have even succeeded last year in holding the first Festival of Rusyn culture in the city of Mukačevo.

In conclusion, I would like to call on all people in Europe who are not indifferent to the fate of our Rusyn people to help us overcome our present difficulties and guarantee our right to function as a distinct nationality. I request that you undertake a campaign to provide Subcarpathian Rus'/Transcarpathia with urgent humanitarian assistance for its children, its hospitals, and for supplies of clothing. We look forward to a better future in which we will live in a common European home alongside all other civilized peoples.

Jevhenij Župan
Mukačevo, Ukraine

POST-COMMUNIST SUBCARPATHIA

Babas in Nikes
Didos in Reeboks
Adidas shops that dominate the town square.

Where are the Lenins
And the red which burned the souls?
Where are the hammers and sickles
And the prisons which locked the thoughts?
Where are the memories of the great Soviets
And the ideology that numbed the people?

The hammer no longer bangs propaganda into
into minds,
The sickle no longer slices the tongues of those
who think aloud.
The nightmare is over.

Subcarpathia awakes ...
It is back to work on the land,
Back to trading goods with border towns.

Farmers and horses
Businessmen and Mercedes
All travel the same road.

All strive for the same goal,
To live a good life,
An honest and prosperous one.

Cindy Magocsi
Užhorod
April 1996

GRANDFATHER'S MEMORIES

The author of the following essay, Mychajlo Tomčanij, was born in Subcarpathian Rus' in 1945. His father, of the same name, was one of the leading novelists in postwar Soviet-ruled Transcarpathia. The son, who always had a talent for drawing, became during the 1980s the chief architect of the city of Užhorod, and in 1990 was the founding chairman of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns, the first organization in Soviet Transcarpathia to promote the idea that Rusyns were not Ukrainians, but a distinct people. Considering his political views and the difficult economic situation after the establishment of an independent Ukraine, the young Tomčanij emigrated with his family to Budapest in Hungary. This essay, translated from Ukrainian by Paul Robert Magocsi, was written in July 1991, just a few months before Tomčanij moved away permanently from his native land.—Editor

When I was a six-year old boy, my father brought me to see my grandfather Ivan Tomčanij, who was living in the village of Horjany, which is today a suburb of Užhorod. Although he was already very ill, he was able to see the drawings I showed him. Grandfather looked at them for a long time and, although he did not say a word, I noticed that tears were falling from his eyes. He bowed down to hug me, and with a voice that was shaking said: "Your really draw well, Mychasyk. Could you draw for me my horses? I would really like to see them."

Grandfather had four horses which together with a piece of land he bought from the money he earned working eight years in a Pennsylvania mine. But then came the post-World War II years. Transcarpathia was annexed to the Soviet Union and Stalinist terror began to sprout up all over Subcarpathian Rus'. People began to disappear for no reason —some because of their democratic views, others because of their religious faith, still others because they were of a nationality not in favor at the time. It is very difficult to imagine what people felt when suddenly, from one day to the next, they found themselves in a country that brutally wiped out the autonomous rights of their small Slavic republic, Subcarpathian Rus', and that deprived them of their Rusyn nationality, their Greek Catholic religion, and their property. They also took everything from grandfather. In the end, he was unable to survive such blows and fell seriously ill.

The next time I saw grandfather it was in a hospital where I brought him my drawing of his horses. He took the drawing in his hands and began to weep: "You've really drawn them beautifully, Mychasyk. It's as if they are alive. They look exactly like my horses." This man, who was the epitome of strength and who stoically survived so many difficult tests that fate had dealt him, was now weeping like a child. Perhaps he recalled how he was devastated with grief when in that one instant the authorities took everything from him, and then how he went to the head of the state-owned cooperative farm (*kolhoz*) and asked to work in the stables, just so he could see his horses. Grandfather barely survived another three years. We buried him on a freezing Christmas day in 1953.

The image of my grandfather as someone who is pure and good has remained engraved in my memory as a symbol of the quintessential Subcarpathian Rusyn. Even today I see in grandfather the fate of my Rusyn people and how life has scattered them throughout the world. Wherever they have gone, their honest and hardworking hands have transformed the land into blooming orchards and wheat-filled or rye-filled fields. My grandfather's life is part of the history of my people. He is like those Rusyns who remained in America and through diligent work contributed to their new homeland which is proud of the Rusyns who went there. He is also one of those Rusyns who until his last dying breath remained in his suffering ancestral homeland where he drank to the fullest the harsh cup that fate dealt the people living there.

In the drawing that accompanies this essay (see **OUR FRONT COVER**), I wanted to tell not only the story of my grandfather, but at the same time the story of my Rusyn people. I have called the drawing "Grandfather's Memories." It shows me on my knees alongside grandfather's bed as he relates the story of his life. As he bids me a final farewell, he hopes that by telling me his life story he can warm my soul. In fact, that warmth still fills me and gives me strength to get through all of life's difficulties. Behind me there is a Christmas tree, while scattered on the floor of hard-packed clay is straw through which are visible walnuts. Beyond the Christmas tree is an angel with bells in its hand, who has come to announce the birth of Jesus Christ and to bring us gifts. Outside, a group of children is caroling.

In his gigantic-sized hands, grandfather is holding his little piece of land with his house, next to which his pregnant wife and two sons are standing. Alongside them are peacefully grazing the two horses he loved so much. The far left of the drawing reminds us of when grandfather, with a bag over his shoulders, stepped across the ocean on his way to America.

Grandfather's life is the epic account of my Rusyn people. And if this can be rendered symbolically through a drawing on a single sheet, there is not enough paper to describe that same story in words.

I am sending to you, my dear brothers and sisters in America, this drawing as a momento from the Rusyn homeland whose sons and daughters you are and always will be. May God protect you and bring happiness to your life. and may you never forget that in this world there is a place, however small, where your people will always be waiting and where you can come and drink the pure and enriching spring water that flows from the slopes of our Carpathian mountains.

Mychajlo Tomčanij
Užhorod, Ukraine

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See related article **GRANDFATHER'S MEMORIES** by Mychajlo Tomčanij.

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A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

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A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Heritage



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FROM THE EDITOR

As I write this issue's editorial, it is only a few days since the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns which I attended in Budapest, Hungary from May 29 to June 1. The sounds and sights are still fresh in my mind, the impressions vivid. I came away having made several new acquaintances, with some questions answered, and new questions yet unanswered. What occurred at the congress was a complex interaction of people who are citizens of several countries, but who share common Rusyn ethnic roots, Rusyn language, and a Rusyn cultural heritage. Most importantly, they are individuals who represent countless others not present at the congress and all of whom are profoundly serious in their intent and desire that the Rusyn language and culture—that Rusyn people—must and will survive.

Although I have travelled and lived in East Central Europe, this was my first visit to Budapest—and I was astonished by this enormous and magnificent city. Budapest, the present capital of Hungary, was truly the capital of a kingdom, with its varied and eclectic architecture, a mixture of styles, betokening the achievements of Hungarian culture at its height. We were reminded of Hungary's history and sense of past glory on the vast tiled Square of Heroes on which rises the Millenium Monument, built between 1896 and 1929, celebrating a thousand years of Hungarian history with seven equestrian statues depicting the seven chieftains of the nomadic Magyar tribes who migrated from the east, conquering the Carpathian Basin in 896. Although Rusyns and Magyars have experienced difficult moments together in their long history within the Hungarian Kingdom, one could come to understand in the midst of Budapest why some Rusyns in the past could have supported a larger Hungarian identity.

Gabor Hattinger, a Rusyn poet and the head of the Organization of Hungary's Rusyns, greeted us at the headquarters of his group, a chaotic smoke-filled few rooms in a building which houses several other minority organizations' offices as well. Delegates were arriving, registering, and were being shuttled off to the assigned hotel, last-minute changes were being made, and complaints addressed. Gabor's great energy and his dark eyes sparkled through all the shouting, laughter, and confusion.

After a quick supper at the hotel, we made our way to the Slovak Cultural Center which had graciously lent out space for the opening and closing cultural program. Here we were officially greeted by Hattinger, and then treated to the songs and dances of a new Rusyn folk ensemble in Hungary, as well as skits from their repertory of plays by actors from the Aleksander Duchnovyč Theater in Prešov, Slovakia, and Rusyn songs performed by the Revilak family singers from Bardejov, Slovakia.

Friday morning we gathered at the Hungarian Cultural Center (Kulturinnov) high on Buda Hill overlooking the Danube and what was once the separate city of Pest on the other side of the river. Here, across a square from the Royal Coronation, or Matthias, Church, and not far from the Castle buildings and fortifications, which are now a major tourist attraction, the congress was convened. Hattinger opened the first plenary session, which began with reports by the chairman of the World Council and by the heads of the six country delegations that make up the Congress. The rest of Friday's activity was centered around brief presentations by various members of the congress, sharing information, experiences, grievances, and hopes with each other. Emotions sometimes ran high as delegates strove to convince the audience of their opinions.

As I sat there I was struck by a number of things. At first glance, I saw a profusion of gray heads, older men, and mainly men. While this impression was not entirely false, a closer look revealed that some delegations as a whole were decidedly younger than others and included at least some women. Slovakia's delegation included Marija Mal'covska and Anna Pliškova, both young, stylish, creative, and intellectual women. The Yugoslav Rusyns included Helena Medješi, Irina Papuga, and Natalja Dudaš, the director of Ruske Slovo publishing house and accomplished poet who presented the newly-published anthology of Rusyn poetry. The Polish delegation brought their beloved poet, Olena Duc-Fajfer, ever young and energetic. Only the American delegation contained the same number of women and men. Surely, in the hectic life of most younger and middle-aged people, there is no time and little or no money for travel to conferences, and this in fact may account for the overall impression given by the participants.

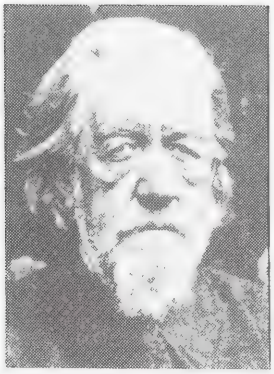
At the same time, I was thrilled to hear Rusyn speech in all its variety. The delegations from Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia all spoke Rusyn, easily communicating with each other, but their language was clearly influenced by the sounds and linguistic features of the countries in which they live. This setting would be a veritable feast for my Slavic linguistic scholar friends, I am certain. I found myself using Russian, Slovak, and also English to speak with other delegates.

It was not long before all of us in the American delegation became aware of the problems and concerns of the various European delegations. The most vocal and urgent of these was expressed by the delegation from Subcarpathian Rus', the members of which have felt under particular strain in light of the increasingly desperate political and economic situation of Rusyns in Ukraine's Transcarpathia. (see the *C-RA*, Vol. XX, No. 1, 1997). Some of these delegates approached us, described in detail their situation, and warmly appealed for our support in their efforts to combat and survive their present situation. It soon became clear that their plight was a basic theme running through the business of the congress for the full four days. How to support the Subcarpathian Rusyns in their social and political situation without jeopardizing Rusyns in other countries who share borders with Ukraine and whose governments need to keep civil relationships with the Ukrainian government—this was the question which occupied many delegates during the course of the congress.

Saturday's activities consisted of a scholarly conference as congress participants divided up into study groups to discuss economic development, history, literature, and pedagogy. These working groups then reported the results of their deliberations on Sunday in the closing hours of the congress. Accomplishments during the past two years were presented alongside information about projects presently underway. Finally, the last few individual presentations not given the first day were offered, including a few words by one of our delegation, Richard Custer, who spoke in good Rusyn about his own background and the work of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society of Pittsburgh.

Saturday night's cultural program deserves special attention, and to that subject, along with some additional observations, I will devote my next editorial.

ALEKSEJ L. PETROV (1859-1931)



The history and culture of Carpatho-Rusyns has long attracted the interest of scholars in many countries. Writers from Russia, in particular, have turned their attention to Carpathian Rus', since in that country many believed that the Rusyns and their homeland were part of a single ethnolinguistic culture that included Russians and other East Slavs. While some Russians may have written one or two works about Rusyns, others studied them in great depth. Perhaps the best known in the second group was Aleksej Leonidovič Petrov, described by one admiring biographer in the 1920s as "the patriarch of contemporary Carpatho-Rusyn scholarship."

Petrov was born in 1859 in St. Petersburg, then the capital of the tsarist Russian empire. His father Leonid Petrov was a well-known professor of theology and author of many works in dogmatics and church history. The young Aleksej at first specialized in mathematics, graduating from *gymnasium* (secondary school) in 1876 with a gold medal in that subject. Events far away, however, were to change his plans about a career in the sciences.

Like many other Russians of his day, Petrov was profoundly moved by the uprisings among the South Slavs that began in 1875 against Ottoman rule. Within a year, those uprisings led to a war between the Ottoman Turks and Russia's Balkan allies, Serbia and little Montenegro. These events were enough to encourage Petrov to want to learn more about the Slavic world, most especially outside the borders of the Russian Empire. He therefore enrolled in the Faculty of History and Philosophy at St. Petersburg University, where he studied with the leading Slavists of the day, including Vladimir I. Lamanskij.

It was under Lamanskij's influence that Petrov became interested in Carpathian Rus', which many in tsarist society considered to be the farthest western "Russian" land beyond the borders of Russia. To learn more about the "Rus' abroad," Petrov made his first visit to the Kingdom of Hungary in 1885. He headed specifically to Carpathian Rus', where he stayed for several days in the Prešov Region village of Čertižné (in present-day Slovakia) at the home of the Carpatho-Rusyn political and cultural activist, Adol'f Dobrians'kyj. Before World War I, Petrov returned three more times to Carpathian Rus' (1890, 1897, and 1911), visiting scholars and archival holdings in Užhorod and Mukačevo.

By the 1890s, Petrov began to publish in Russian scholarly journals the first results of his research on Carpatho-Rusyns. His output was prodigious and by World War I he had published seven volumes in a series called *Materialy dlja istorij Ugorskoj Rusi* (Materials on the History of Hungarian Rus', 1905-14). These works included descriptions of archives and demographic analyses of the Carpathian region, documents dealing with the fourteenth-century leader, Fedir Koriatovyč, and the impact of the Reformation on the Orthodox Rusyns. With these works, Petrov's reputation was firmly established. He was awarded a doctorate in 1911, and was appointed to a professorship in the history of the Slavs at St. Petersburg University.

Petrov's life as an "ivory-tower" scholar was interrupted by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent Civil War. Ever since the outbreak of World War I in 1914, his research trips abroad were forced to end, while at home in the new Soviet Russia after 1918 it became increasingly difficult to remain aloof from politics. In 1922, Petrov was granted a research leave by the Bolshevik authorities to travel abroad. He welcomed the opportunity and travelled to Prague, the capital of the new state of Czechoslovakia. He was never to return home.

As part of the "White Russian" emigration that sought refuge in several European countries, Petrov was able to take advantage of the special assistance that the Czechoslovak government provided to fellow Slavs from the former Russian Empire. After settling in Prague and until his death in 1931, Petrov was able to visit almost once each year Czechoslovakia's new eastern province of Subcarpathian Rus' to carry out further archival research and to consult with local Rusyn scholars.

Throughout his life, Petrov was a Positivist, that is, he believed that by uncovering concrete documentary evidence the "true" historical record could be told. Therefore, most of his published work consists of texts of archival documents, religious polemics, and other early literary monuments (all with extensive commentaries) as well as compilations of topographic names. He often used linguistic and geographic data to justify his tentative conclusions about historic events, but he avoided for the most part archaeological evidence and folkloric traditions. All in all, Petrov was reluctant to generalize or to speculate on matters that were not documented in the written material he collected. It is only in the last work published before his death *The Oldest Documents on the History of the Carpatho-Rusyn Church and Hierarchy, 1391-1498* that he finally drew some generalizations and posed various hypotheses for other scholars to reflect upon and to research further.

Because of his exclusive reliance on written documentation, Petrov challenged what he called historical myths and he reached conclusions that were not always popular among Rusyns. For instance, he dismissed the view that Cyril and Methodus or even their disciples brought Christianity to the Subcarpathian region; he argued that Rusyns settled the region after the arrival of the Magyars; and he was convinced that no independent medieval state such as the Marchia Ruthenorum had ever existed. Such "radical" views have subsequently been challenged and in some cases refuted by new archaeological, historical, and linguist research. In the end, this would have made Petrov happy, because he had always argued that Carpatho-Rusyns were deserving of a history based on all the facts available and that was written without any preconceived ideological or political agenda. Present-day researchers writing about Carpatho-Rusyns would do well to follow the scholarly precepts of Aleksej L. Petrov.

Philip Michaels

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US

The following essay is by Professor Myron Sysak, a literary historian and critic who is chairman of the Department of Russian Language and Literature at Šafárik *University in* Prešov, *Slovakia. In 1996, Myron Sysak (not to be confused with his brother Jaroslav, director of the* Duchnovyč *National Theater) was elected vice-chairman of the Rusyn Renaissance Society (Rusyn'ska Obroda). This essay, translated by Paul Robert Magocsi, first appeared in Rusyn in the newspaper* Narodnŷ novynkŷ, *January 1997.*—Editor

When speaking about national identity, we often hear our local Ukrainians proclaim that they are at the same time Rusyns. The issue is one of equivalent terms, which effectively is a needless redundancy: a Rusyn is the same as a Ukrainian, that is, when one says "Rusyn," one automatically thinks "Ukrainian." They have even created an organization which reflects the above logic and is called the Union of Rusyns-Ukrainians (Sojuz rusyniv-ukrajinciv).

Little is said, however, that the opposite should also apply: when one says "Ukrainian," one should think "Rusyn." This the local Ukrainians do not mention for fear of being laughed at, since the implication would be that a Ukrainian from the Poltava region or from Kiev or Zhytomir is a Rusyn. Our local Ukrainians know quite well that Ukrainians have never recognized Rusyns as something distinct, and that they have no intention of doing so. Rusyns are simply Ukrainians.

Such an anomalous situation can only occur among us. Not too long ago, before 1989, whenever the word Rusyn may have been mentioned, the general reaction was categorical: "There is no such thing." Then, after the revolution of November 1989, Rusyns and therefore a Rusyn nationality was reluctantly recognized as perhaps something from the past, but . . .

What followed were explanations of the closeness between Rusyns and Ukrainians, of how the Rusyn language is a dialect of the Ukrainian language, and of how we have similar folk customs and a common religion. What our Ukrainians do not want to hear is that such statements are without foundation and untrue.

If national identity were determined on the grounds of ethnographic similarities, then the Slavic, Germanic, and Romance peoples would represent single nationalities. And are not Ukrainians technically close to the Russians? In fact, they are so close that not too long ago they were known as Little Russians. Although our local Ukrainians have an aversion to such historical facts, this does not stop them from employing the same tactics toward us Rusyns. According to them, we are simply "Little Ukrainians" who have not yet reached the level of nationally conscious Ukrainians.

The fact that many words in the Rusyn language are similar to Ukrainian does not prove the existence of a single people. In this regard, we only need to mention the closeness of the Slovak and Czech languages, not to speak of the virtually identical languages of Serbs and Croats, of Germans and Austrians, or of the English and the Americans. The difference between the Rusyn and Ukrainian languages is certainly greater than between Slovak and Czech. And yet no one among the Ukrainians would question the national distinctiveness of the Czechs and the Slovaks. More than 70 percent of the Ukrainian vocabulary is incomprehensible to a Rusyn, and for that reason we have to learn Ukrainian as we do a foreign language. Moreover, no one here uses Ukrainian for daily communication, and less than one percent write or read it. In the end, even our so-called Rusyn-Ukrainian elite speak among themselves in Rusyn and use it for communication among their family members.

With regard to the originality and distinctiveness of Rusyns vis-à-vis Ukrainians, one needs to look in particular at folklore. For better or for worse, Ukrainian folklore reflects the historic suffering of that people, its wars on the steppeland against nomadic invaders, and the Cossack campaigns against the Ottoman Turks, Russians, and Poles. Shaven heads with a long single braid of hair, silken loose-fitting pants that are as flowingly wide as the sea, a sword at the side, footwear designed for long travel, and bright ornamental colors are all elements that are integral to traditional Ukrainian dress. Among Rusyns such garments are unknown and at the very least seem comical.

Rusyns, in contrast, did not experience such a harsh historical past. The family, the home, the fields, the pastures, the church, children—these were the focus of their everyday lives. The traditional clothing of Rusyns derived from sheepswool, linen, and hemp. Rusyns generally had shoulder-length hair and the men almost always wore small-brimmed felt hats. Their shirts were modestly decorated with a colored cross-stitched embroidery, that fit over heavy straight-fitting pants, and they wore sewn leather moccasins. It was only later under the influence of Magyars and Slovaks that Rusyn men began to wear heavy boots with spurs.

And what about our music and dance? It is up-beat, rhythmic, light, and dominated by bass and counterbass instruments. What does this have in common with Ukrainian epic poetry recited to the accompaniment of the high-pitched stringed bandura, or with the beautiful *kožacok* and *hopak* dances? Nothing.

Religious faith was and will continue to be a matter of individual choice. The fact remains, however, that our ancestors left the Orthodox world, which continues to dominate most of Ukraine and most Ukrainians. The revival of Orthodoxy in our lands has only brought problems, from which even the local Orthodox church has distanced itself.

Rusyns have never had a common historical past nor have they shared a common state with Ukrainians. Separated from them by the Beskyds and other Carpathian ranges, we have evolved in our own manner. Most of Ukraine has traditionally been oriented toward the East, while we have been oriented toward the West. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when Europe was experiencing national revivals and the formation of modern nationalities, we remained separated from Ukraine not only by mountains but also by state borders. That was a time when Ukrainians became a distinct people, while among us the sacred words were being heard: "I was, am, and will remain a Rusyn."

The person who wrote those words, Aleksander Duchnovyč, was no less educated than we are today. He was well aware of the ethnic and national situation of his day. He knew about Ukrainians and that we were ethnically close to them. He even wrote that beyond the mountains the people are not foreign to us. But it was precisely because he knew all this that he deliberately defined himself and us by the formulation: I am a Rusyn . . .

We know who Duchnovyč was referring to—the Rusyns of Subcarpathian Rus' and us in northeastern Slovakia, the Lemkos of Poland, and the Rusyns of Galicia and Bukovina. Duchnovyč also knew quite well that for an

ethnic group to become a distinct people, it had to have its own language, ethnic identity, history, and folklore, as well as recognition as a nationality within the state in which it lived. Austria-Hungary was such a state as was later Czechoslovakia. These historic developments are, moreover, well known to the present-day propagators of a so-called Unified Ukraine (Soborna Ukrajina). Nevertheless, they simply want to do the same thing they did in 1944 to the Rusyns of Subcarpathian Rus' and Bukovina—to absorb us into Ukraine.

But believe me when I say that we were, are, and will remain Rusyns. We do not want to be Ukrainians, nor become a part of a "unified" Greater Ukraine, to which we have never belonged.

In contrast to our local Ukrainian enthusiasts, we do not consider the land we inhabit to be Ukrainian territory which somehow is waiting for the day when it can join its "true fatherland." Rusyns and their homeland form an integral part of Slovakia, that is, the Slovak Republic whose borders are inviolable. We do not have any other "mother country"; we are at home here in Slovakia.

Although we speak differently, we consider Slovak to be the language closest to us and one that every Rusyn [in eastern Slovakia] speaks. For us, Ukrainian is a foreign language which we are willing to learn just as we would any other foreign language. That one should study the Ukrainian language is obvious, since Ukraine is the largest state with which we have a common border. We, therefore, recognize the need for the Department of Ukrainian Language and Literature at Šafárik University in Prešov as an institution that will train Ukrainian specialists, just as a Department of English trains specialists in English. On the other hand, if the Ukrainian Department will continue to exist with the primary goal of training teachers for our Rusyn schools, then we do not need such an institution. For our part, we will continue to work on behalf of the establishment of our own university Department of Rusyn Language and Literature, so that finally our children and grandchildren will be able to study their own mother tongue like any other children in the world.

Despite the presentations of our local Ukrainophiles and their foreign sponsors, our culture, with its icons and unique wooden architecture, and our villages and towns have never been considered, nor does anyone now consider them, to be Ukrainian. All these rich elements evolved as Rusyn and will remain Rusyn. The entire region of northeastern Slovakia is a territory that for ages has been inhabited only by Rusyns and Slovaks.

And just who are those people who for the past half century have been trying to implant among us the Ukrainian nationality, who have forced and who are still forcing upon us the Ukrainian language, and who have denigrated the Rusyn language and dismissed the existence of Rusyns?

For the most part they are Ukrainian émigrés and their descendants who for various reasons settled here after World War I. We welcomed their parents and grandparents, since at the time they were fleeing the evils of Bolshevism and were threatened with losing their nationality by force. They have shown their gratefulness by trying to "denationalize" us. Their descendants and our own local Ukrainianizers find themselves in a different situation, however. There are no more Bolsheviks, and Ukraine is united and independent, something they had always wanted. Why, one might ask, are they still hesitating and why are they not rushing to Ukraine? What's keeping them here? Why don't they return to where they would have everything their parents and grandparents were denied? Is it only the widespread poverty and disorder in Ukraine that keeps them from going there? On the other hand, wouldn't those same conditions provide them with great opportunities for new initiatives to realize their conception of what an organized Ukrainian national life should be? Or is it because they fear they would not be accepted, wouldn't be considered Ukrainian enough, and would be immediately singled out for their Rusyn and Hutsul accent?!

Of course, the real reason is that life for them is much better in Slovakia. This is especially the case for those who receive handsome salaries as functionaries simply because they declare themselves to be Ukrainian, who dismiss the tolerant attitude of our state toward the nationality question, and instead try to intimidate Slovak officials by reminding them of their big Ukrainian brothers in the East. If, indeed, this little piece of Slovakia is for them sweeter and more pleasant, then the least they could do is be quiet and not repeat that we are somehow a part of Ukraine.

The basic difference between the Rusyns and the local Ukrainians in Slovakia is the following. For Rusyns, the year 1952 marked the beginning of forcible Ukrainianization which we consider a national tragedy. As a result, out of the more than 250 Rusyn schools that existed before 1952, not a single one remains today. One searches in vain to place the blame on specific individuals, and much of the explanation is found in the process of gradual national assimilation and the loss of population in Rusyn villages. But even in those towns and villages that remain vibrant today, the past and present inhabitants rejected and still reject the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian schools.

In great contrast, all local Ukrainian spokespersons, both those who were Communists and those who were persecuted by the Communists, consider the year 1952 and the program of Ukrainianization as the most important event in our entire recent history. They consider it to be the fulfilment of historical truth and justice. But does it bother them that as a result of Ukrainianization we as a national community now stand on death's doorstep? Does it mean anything to them that as a result of what happened in 1952 the defenders of Rusynism—village teachers and Greek Catholic priests—were persecuted for their beliefs?

Persecution meant the loss of one's self-respect, one's position in school or in the local parish, separation from one's family, and isolation from students and the church. It meant arrest and forced labor in the Czechoslovak gulag. And it meant that those who were forced to leave were replaced by teachers trained in the Ukrainian language and by Orthodox priests. All this contributed to the devastation of our national community, increasing national assimilation, and loss of one's identity. That, my dear colleagues, is what you call "historical truth and justice."

A half a century of such a policy has forced many of our people to adapt in order to survive and somehow preserve something of their ancestral traditions and religion. In that regard, we do not consider anything bad if someone in those days identified as a Ukrainian and may have become Orthodox. That is a matter for each individual and his or her conviction. But let not those who have changed deny others the right to be what they wish to be, that is, Rusyns without any other identity added on.

Myron Sysak
Prešov, Slovakia

RUSYN LITERATURE PRIZE AWARDED

This year at the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns the Steven Chepa Aleksander Duchnovyč Prize in Rusyn Literature was awarded for the first time. The recipient was Djura Papharhaji, a Rusyn writer from Yugoslavia, who was chosen by an international jury that included Dr. Maria Pavlovszky (Indiana University), Professor Elaine Rusinko (University of Maryland), and Professor Myron Sysak, (University of Prešov). The jury received works from thirteen authors, which speaks well for the growth of Rusyn literature. The criteria for judging were purely aesthetic, and jury members were impressed by the profundity and originality of the authors' thoughts. This diversity made choosing a winner especially difficult, since the works were not entirely comparable.

Among the submissions were sophisticated poetry and intellectual fiction, folk-style lyrics, political satire, and children's verse. Some of it was directed at a broad audience and therefore written at an accessible level in carefully crafted colloquial language, while the sophisticated thematics and imagery of other works apparently addressed a cultural and intellectual elite. Obviously, both approaches are necessary for the development of this young literature.

Djura Papharhaji's poetry combines high aesthetic merit with themes and images that can be read on many levels, and thus it allows access to his poetic world for a broad range of readers. He combines traditional poetic themes, such as love, "ars poetica," nature, philosophical and religious reflection, with personal and national motifs, such as the legacy of his Rusyn ancestors, his emotions on visiting a local cemetery, and depictions of his native town, Ruski Kerestur. The simplicity of his language, his mastery of rhyme and meter, and the aphoristic expression of his thoughts makes one want to recite his poems and to learn them by heart. As Professor Sysak said, "That is the highest praise for a poet."

Papharhaji's book, *Putovanje na juh* (1991), is the culmination of a long career in literature and the theater. Born in Ruski Kerestur, Yugoslavia, in 1936, Papharhaji worked as a teacher and then as an editor in the publishing house Ruske Slovo. From 1966 to 1995, he was executive editor of the Vojvodinian-Rusyn literary journal *Švetlosc* (Enlightenment). His literary corpus, going back to his first collection of poetry from 1969, includes poems, short stories, songs, children's literature, and plays, and several of his works have been translated into many East European languages.

In our conversations, Papharhaji indicated that he thinks of himself as a dramatist, and has worked as playwright and director in several theaters. He has received many awards, including in 1995 the prestigious "Vuk Award" (named for the nineteenth-century Serbian national awakener Vuk Karadžić). This is the highest literary award given in Yugoslavia, and Papharhaji is the only Rusyn to be so honored. Therefore, it is fitting that he should also be the first recipient of the Aleksander Duchnovyč Prize for the best work in Rusyn literature. A most reassuring and gratifying note is that a number of other candidates for the prize shared their support for Papharhaji's nomination, stating that he was the most suitable and deserving choice this year. On receiving the prize, Papharhaji recited his poem, "In the Beginning was the Word." I hope to translate some of his poetry for a future issue of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*.

Elaine Rusinko
Baltimore, Maryland

A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

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RUSYNS ARE, AND WILL BE

Remarks at the IV World Congress of Rusyns
Budapest, Hungary May 29, 1997

"Ruténnek sohasem vallottam magam, de azt tagadtam, hogy a kárpátaljai orosz nepből szarmazom. . . . Magyar vagyok a test országában, görögkatolikus a lélek birodalmában."/"I never identified myself as a Rusyn, even though I never denied that I was a descendant of the Carpatho-Rusyn people. . . . I am a Magyar in body and a Greek Catholic in soul." These words were spoken nearly a century ago by a young Rusyn journalist living in Budapest, Ivan Prodan, or as he preferred to be called János Prodan.

But why did our János use such words and also act in a way that many of us would criticize as an act betrayal of one's own Rusyn people. The reasons are related partly to the general social and political environment within Hungary at the time, and partly they reflect what might be called the shortcomings of the Rusyn national character.

It was in 1905 that Prodan made the above statement, when he was editor of the Budapest Greek Catholic newspaper *Görögkatolikus hírlap*. But the origins of such an attitude go back to the late 1890s, when Prodan was a student at the University of Budapest and president of a Rusyn student group called the Ung County Circle. While a university student, Prodan experienced first hand the period of intense Magyar nationalism that was sweeping the entire old Hungarian Kingdom, from Transylvania, Subcarpathian Rus', and Slovakia, to the Burgenland, Croatia, the Vojvodina and everywhere in between. The nationalistic fervor culminated in 1896 at the millennial celebrations which commemorated the crossing of the Magyar tribes in the year 896 through the Verec'kyj pass in the Carpathians, their capture of the fortified town of Ungvár (Užhorod), their settlement in the Danubian Basin, and their eventual establishment of the Hungarian state.

One of the highlights of those millennial celebrations was the plan to construct the Great Square of Heroes in Budapest. When the square was finally completed 35 years later, it featured in the center the powerful equestrian figures of Árpád and the leaders of seven other Magyar tribes that came to settle in the heart of Europe at the very end of the ninth century. Just last year, the whole square was refurbished on the occasion of the 1,100 year of the Magyars' arrival, and I suggest that all of us at the Fourth World Congress visit the square.

I believe such a visit would remind us of two things. First, we would see how the statues in and around the square instill a powerful sense of national pride that allows Magyars to be proud of themselves and the state of Hungary that has existed for over a thousand years. Rusyns, who have traditionally had a strong sense of national inferiority, might do well to learn something of Magyar pride and self-confidence.

On the other hand, national pride can sometimes lead to arrogance and intolerance toward others. This was certainly a characteristic of Magyar nationalism at the end of the nineteenth century, which in turn encouraged and reinforced a sense of inferiority among non-Magyars. This was the kind of environment that led to people like our Ivan/János Prodan to want to give up his identity and more than anything else to be a Magyar. We should also remember that in the late nineteenth century some of the leading assimilationists—teachers, priests, and journalists—were not Magyars, but the Rusyns themselves.

But that was nearly a century ago, and much has transpired since then. In this same Budapest, which one hundred years ago was celebrating the glories of Hungarian culture and the desirability of being Magyar, we find ourselves today meeting at the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns to proclaim the glories of Rusyn culture and the desirability of being Rusyn. The very congress and the Organization of Rusyns that is our host has in large part been made possible by the positive attitude of the present post-Communist Hungarian government. That government has come to realize that like the vast majority of countries throughout the world, Hungary is a multicultural country. Aside from Magyars, its citizens represent several other nationalities, including Rusyns, and all of them are equal citizens of the Hungarian state. Respect for all peoples, even this country's few thousand Rusyns, reveals the degree to which present-day democratic Hungary accepts and abides by the highest political and social standards that are considered the norm for Europe on the eve of the twenty-first century. It is very gratifying to be in a country which recognizes the fact that Rusyns are a distinct people.

Turning to my specific role as president of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center in the United States, I would like to say a few words about Rusyn life in North America since the last world congress two years ago. The general goals of our center remain what they have always been since we came into existence twenty years ago: (1) to inform Americans of Rusyn background about the history, culture, and present developments in the lands of their forefathers; and (2) to promote awareness of Rusyns as a distinct people and culture among the society at large, including governments, media, universities, and international organizations worldwide.

The Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center is primarily a publishing house for scholarly books and other popular material about Rusyns. We also provide limited support to researchers and writers worldwide. For instance, in the past two years, we published: (1) a large-scale map of all villages where Rusyns lived between 1806 and 1921; (2) a collection of essays on the codification of the Rusyn literary language in Slovakia with an introduction by the renowned Slavist, Nikita Tolstoj; and (3) popular brochures about Carpatho-Rusyns in English, Polish, Slovak, and Ukrainian, which were reproduced by other Rusyn organizations in Hungarian, Serbian, and Vojvodinian Rusyn. At present our most important projects are to publish English translations of three outstanding monographs about Rusyn history and culture by Pëtr Bogatyrëv, Maria Mayer, and Aleksei L.

Petrov; the second volume of the "national bibliography" of Carpatho-Rusyn studies for the years 1985-1994; and to complete the Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture under the editorship of Professor Ivan Pop and myself. With regard to assistance to Rusyn scholars and writers, our center continues to send hundreds of books, brochures, and maps gratis to individuals and Rusyn organizations in Europe, and we have helped to establish the annual Duchovyč Prize for the best work in Rusyn literature, the first one of which will be awarded at this congress.

Although we are not a political organization, the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center does provide information about current problems in the Rusyn homeland, primarily through our quarterly publication, the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*. During the past two years, our public relations officer issued an inquiry to the Government of Slovakia regarding the status of Rusyns in that country, for which we received detailed responses from two ministers (culture and education) as well as the vice-premier of Slovakia. At present our Center is making available information to the United States Congress, the American media, and international organizations regarding the recent government of Ukraine's "Plan for Resolving the Problem of Ukrainian-Rusyns."

I should stress that the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center with its approximately 6,000 supporters, does not do all of the above alone. There are at least three other organizations in the United States—the Lemko Association in Yonkers, New York; the Rusin Association of Minnesota; the Carpatho-Rusyn Society in Pittsburgh—and in Canada the Rusyn Society of North America in Kitchener, Ontario, each of which functions as a social and cultural organization for Rusyns who came from a particular area in Europe or who represent a group living in a particular part of the New World. The Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center works especially closely with the Rusin Association and the newer, rapidly growing Carpatho-Rusyn Society based in western Pennsylvania.

Finally, the past two years have seen Carpatho-Rusyns become part of the new world of communications technology. There is a Carpatho-Rusyn page on the World Wide Web. As a result, Rusyns have made it into cyberspace. And this is not merely some kind of technological game. Thousands of people of Rusyn background and non-Rusyns have found out about Carpatho-Rusyns on the internet and are able to follow the most recent events happening to Rusyns wherever they live. Some of you here today may think no one knows about us, but I can assure you news of this very congress will be accessible throughout cyberspace tomorrow, if not already today.

May I conclude with a few words about cooperation. I just noted the successes of the past two decades achieved by American and Canadian Rusyns. This has been possible because, even if Rusyns are separated from each other by thousands of kilometers throughout North America, each of our organizations tries to follow closely what each other is doing, to cooperate wherever possible, and to avoid duplication of efforts. Fortunately today, in all countries but one where Carpatho-Rusyns live, they are allowed to organize themselves and to carry out activities with some degree of state support. The result has been a burgeoning of new publishing houses and new scholarly organizations. Cultural work, in particular, has been able to transcend borders. Rusyn theaters and folk ensembles share their expertise and they travel to other countries where our people live; Rusyn publishing houses in different countries have produced joint publications; scholars have met for debate at conferences; and certainly the four world congresses serve as outstanding examples of interaction and cooperation among Rusyns.

More attention, however, needs to be given to cooperation among scholars. To be sure, the new Rusyn scholarly organizations in each country should remain independent and determine their own programs, but they should also try to avoid duplication, whether it be the production of several anthologies of poetry, or research projects on the very same topics but carried out in different places. And is it not time for another congress of the Rusyn language? I believe the time has come to assess what was achieved since the first language congress back in November 1992 and to determine what should be undertaken jointly or individually in the future.

In a real sense, we as Rusyns have come a long way. For the first time we can all meet together periodically, regardless of what county we live in, and we can even plan and carry out joint projects. This was unheard of ten, even five years ago. Many Rusyns have justifiably acquired a new sense of self-confidence of the kind their predecessors never had before.

For this reason, it is so satisfying to be in Budapest. This is no longer the capital of a culture and state that suppresses Rusyns, but one which welcomes them and encourages them in their cultural endeavors. This is no longer the city which has a János Prodan, who like many Rusyns of the past—and also still some at present—had an ingrained sense of inferiority and therefore shame about their Rusyn origins. Instead, this is the city of Gabriel Hattinger and his young colleagues, all fully certain of both their Rusyn identity and their Hungarian citizenship.

Do Rusyns in Hungary still have problems? Probably so. But since the Revolution of 1989 and the rise of a new generation of young Rusyn activists we now know two things. Yes, there will always be problems, but solutions can always be found. In the past five years alone how many problems have each of you faced in Slovakia, in Poland, in Ukraine, in Hungary, in wartorn Yugoslavia, yes, even in America? And how many of those problems have been partially, if not fully resolved? Your success and your presence as Rusyns here today is the reality we must carry into the twenty-first century. There is no doubt that whether in the Carpathian homeland, in other cities and regions of Europe and North America, or in cyberspace, Rusyns are and will be.

Robert Paul Magocsi
Toronto, Ontario

SINCE THE REVOLUTION OF 1989

Tartu, Estonia. On October 14-15, 1996, the Organization of Non-Represented Peoples held a regional conference at which the status of Subcarpathian Rus' was discussed. The conference sent a letter to Ukraine's President Leonid Kučma expressing its "great discontent with the fate of the Subcarpathian Rusyn people who, for the longest time, have been unable to exercise their right to self-determination." The Tartu regional conference also issued a resolution calling on the Executive Committee of the Organization of Non-Represented Peoples to consult with the European Court so that it might eventually hear the case for restoring to Subcarpathian Rus' the status of an autonomous republic.

Kocur, Yugoslavia. In January 1997, the Kostelnik Rusyn Cultural and Artistic Society of Kocur, a town with the second largest concentration of Rusyns in Yugoslavia, issued a formal declaration to the authorities in the Vojvodina Region requesting that the name of the annual Červena Ruža Folk Festival of Rusyns and Ukrainians in Yugoslavia be changed. They wish that the original name used until 1968 be restored: the Červena Ruža Folk Festival of Yugoslav Rusyns. As reported by the local newspaper, *Ruske slovo* (February 14, 1997, p. 8): "The festival was created by Rusyns [Rusnaks]; consequently, there is no need to add the phrase 'and Ukrainians', since the latter are not the organizers of the festival but only appear as guest performers. Ukrainians should continue to be invited, but be welcomed like all other invitees as participating guests and not as the organizers whose name is featured in the very name of the festival."

Mukačevo, Ukraine. On January 1, 1997, Auxiliary Bishop Ivan Margityč of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukačevo in Subcarpathian Rus' (Transcarpathia) issued a statute in the name of "Transcarpathian Greek Catholic parishes that wish to attain Church Unity with all Greek Catholics in Ukraine under the Archbishop Patriarch Myroslav Cardinal Lubačivs'kyj." In response, the bishop of Mukačevo, Ivan Semedi, published a rejection of the illegal act of Bishop Margityč, pointing out that the question of the jurisdiction of the Eparchy of Mukačevo was studied in detail by the Vatican, which in 1992 reasserted the particular status (*sui juris*) of the eparchy directly under the authority of the Holy See. This decision was reiterated by the Vatican in October 1995 and underscored by the special favor accorded to the eparchy on the occasion of its 350th anniversary celebrations held in Užhorod (April 1995) and Rome (October 1995).

Nevertheless, Bishop Margityč who is a fervent Ukrainian nationalist, continues a campaign to detach parishes from the Eparchy of Mukačevo and to unite them with the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Archeparchy based in L'viv in neighboring Galicia.

Belgrade, Yugoslavia. On April 30, 1997, Ivan Sedlak, Minister for Human Rights and National Minorities in the government of Serbia, received a delegation from the Ruske Slovo publishing house in Novi Sad, the administrative center for the Vojvodinian Rusyns. In a discussion concerning the status of Rusyns in present-day Yugoslavia, Minister Sedlak stated: "The more one looks at the historical past, at language, and at culture, the more one realizes that there is a difference between Rusyns and Ukrainians. In effect Rusyns have their own specificity, which in our country has made them into a distinct national minority. . . . Each person has the right to look for his or her roots and to discuss and debate such matters, but no one has the right to impose or force upon another that which is not considered to be his or her own. In essence, according to our laws and constitution, Rusyns are one people and Ukrainians are another people. There is no reason to believe that such legal norms will change." (Cited from *Ruske slovo*, May 30, 1997, p. 7).

Budapest, Hungary. On May 29-June 1, 1997, the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns took place in Budapest. Over 200 delegates and guests from twenty countries took part in the proceedings which were funded by the government of Hungary and hosted by the Organization of Rusyns in Hungary, headed by Gabriel Hattinger. On the first day, Natalija Dudaš presented the handsomely designed anthology of Rusyn poetry (*Rusinski/Ruski poeziji), which was commissioned at the second congress in 1993. Also, the first annual* Duchnovyč Prize for the best work in Rusyn literature, funded by Steven Chepa of Toronto in the amount of $1,000, was awarded to Djura Papharhaji of Yugoslavia for his collection of poetry, *Putovanje na juh* (On the Road to the South).

A scholarly conference took place the second day, sponsored by the Rusyn Research Institute of Hungary under the direction of Dr. Tibor Mikloš Popovyč. Conference participants were invited to the installation of a memorial plaque at the entrance of the last residence in Budapest of Professor Antal Hodinka, a leading Hungarian historian of Rusyn origin active during the first half of the twentieth century.

Two nights of culturalperformances featured the newly-founded Rusyn dance ensemble, Drin, from Budapest; choirs from two Rusyn villages in northwestern Hungary, Komlóska and Múcsony; the Greek Catholic Choir from Mukačevo in Subcarpathian Rus'; and from Slovakia the Aleksander Duchnovyč Theater of Prešov and the Revilak Family Singers from Bardejov.

The World Congress of Rusyns is directed by an Executive Council (Svitova Rada) comprised of the Rusyn Renaissance Society (Slovakia), the Society of Subcarpathian Rusyns (Ukraine), the Lemko Association (Poland), the Ruska Matka (Yugoslavia), the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center (United States), and the Organization of Rusyns (Hungary). A seventh member organization was elected to the Executive Council at the Fourth Congress, the Society of Friends of Subcarpathian Rus' (Czech Republic). Rusyn organizations from Germany, Latvia, and Russia were accepted as candidates for possible full membership at the next congress. The Fifth World Congress is designated to be held in 1999 in Ukraine (Subcarpathian Rus'). Vasyl' Turok of Slovakia was reelected chairman of the Executive Committee (Svitova Rada). The resolutions of the Fourth World Congress will appear in the next issue of the *C-RA*.

OUR FRONT COVER

The Revilak family singers from Bardejov, Slovakia, in performance at the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns. (photo by Richard Custer)



From left to right: Ivan Turjanycja, head of the delegation to the World Congress of Rusyns from Subcarpathian Rus'; Gabor Hattinger, head of the Organization of Rusyns in Hungary; and Vasyl Turok, president of the World Congress of Rusyns. (photo by Richard Custer)

RECENT EVENTS

Prešov, Slovakia. On March 27, 1997, the Greek Catholic Bishop of Prešov, Ioann Hirka, gave his imprimatur for the publication of a Rusyn translation of three religious texts: the *Apostoly, Jevanhelija*, and *Tajny*. The texts were translated under the direction of Father František Krajnjak of Medzilaborce, and although completed in 1988 they have been awaiting since then approval (an imprimatur) from the church hierarchy for publication. In 1992, the Rusyn Renaissance Society published 10,000 copies of Father Krajnjak's Rusyn-language *Malŷj* hrekokatolyc'kyj katechizm pro *rusyn'skŷ* dity (Small Greek Catholic Catechism for Rusyn Children), which is available from the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center.

Prešov, Slovakia. For the past few years, a Slovak-Czech Historical Commission has been meeting annually to investigate past problems that are of common interest to the Czech Republic and Slovakia. On April 9, 1997, the commission met at the University of Prešov, and its theme for this year was "Subcarpathian Rus' in the History of Czechoslovakia, 1918-1939."

For each topic there was a presentation by a scholar from the Czech Republic and from Slovakia. Among the topics analyzed were: historiography—Jan Harna (Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague) and Michál Danilák (University of Prešov); the unification of Subcarpathian Rus' with Czechoslovakia—Péter Švorc (University of Prešov) and František Kolář (Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague); Czech and Slovak relations with Rusyns—Robert Holec (Comenius University, Bratislava); socioeconomic, cultural, and political problems—J. Žadanský (Regional Museum of Trebišov), L'udovít Haraksim (Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava), and Bohdan Zilynskyj (Charles University, Prague); the 1938-1939 period of autonomy—Ladislav Suško (Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava) and M. Borák (Silesian Institute, Opava); and the Soviet trial of Carpatho-Ukraine's government leaders—Mykola Mušynka (University of Prešov). The presentations and following discussion were at a high level and the proceedings are expected to be published.

Košice, Slovakia. From May 9 to 13, 1997, the fourth annual Festival of Professional Theaters in Slovakia was held in Košice and neighboring Prešov. Over 25 professional theaters performed. The first prize (100,000 Slovak crowns) for the best dramatic production was awarded to the Aleksander Duchnovyč Theater of Prešov for its production in Rusyn of a play by the Slovak dramatist Martin Kukučín. Since its change to a Rusyn orientation in 1990, the Duchnovyč Theater has performed in several countries abroad (Great Britain, Sweden, the Netherlands, Romania), while at home its performances have become some of the best attended throughout Slovakia. The theater's artistic director is Osyf Tkač.

PUBLICATIONS IN ENGLISH ABOUT CARPATHO-RUSYNS, 1992

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A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Heritage



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FROM THE EDITOR

In my last editorial I promised that I would comment on the cultural program presented at the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns in Budapest, May 29-June 1, 1997. I have yet another issue to address in this editorial, but first to the cultural program.

The main work of the congress was the discussion of scholarly work already accomplished and yet to be accomplished by Rusyn scholars from all regions of the homeland, as well as political and social concerns. Some of these issues, such as the dire situation of Rusyns in Subcarpathian Rus', are particularly urgent and were reported in the last issue of this publication as was the awarding of the first Steven Chepa Aleksander Duchnovyč Prize in Rusyn Literature (see the *C-RA*, Vol. XX, No. 2, pp. 2 and 4-9). Likewise, Rusyn delegates and visitors from a number of countries intermingled and got acquainted. In all these regards, the purpose of the congress was successfully achieved.

But it was the cultural program—a rich conglomeration of exhibits, drama fragments, folksong and dance, and poetry—which crowned the congress. In the Hungarian Culture Foundation where the congress was held, delegates were able to peruse exhibits by the brilliant cartoonist Fedor Vico, whose clever wit and work with political, social, and cultural motifs are widely known. Vico himself was there to answer questions. The Andy Warhol Clubs of Hungary and Slovakia also offered exhibits connected with Warhol's art and their activity as an organization. Books, pamphlets, newspapers, journals, and other printed materials representing Rusyns from all regions of the homeland were available for viewing and purchase.

Performances were held the first evening after delegates had gathered, as well as on the last evening before the end of the congress. Both sessions took place in a hall kindly lent by the Slovak Cultural Center in Budapest. After a greeting by András Pavlik, Hungary's Minister of Education and Culture, and Rusyn poet Gabor Hattinger, organizer of the congress, a young folk ensemble, Dran', performed several fiery Rusyn and Hungarian dances and songs. A Rusyn family from Bardejov, Slovakia, the Revilaks, accompanying themselves on three accordians and guitar, then launched into a series of favorite Rusyn songs (see the front cover of the *C-RA*, Vol. XX, No. 2, 1997).

Particularly impressive was a series of fragments from plays offered by actors from the Aleksander Duchnovyč Theater in Prešov, Slovakia. Performing fragments of larger works back to back is not easy, for actors must be capable of creating immediately and spontaneously the mood which ordinarily is woven by previous action in the play. Language and gesture are significant in the interplay between the actors and the audience, for the audience must be able to recognize itself and its strengths and weaknesses, its emotions, its life and yearnings in the words and movements of the actors in order for it to respond to what is happening on the stage. Through the brilliance of the scripts and the talent of the actors all of this took place. It was at times as intriguing to some of us in the American delegation to monitor the responses of the audience as to watch the stage. Obviously, subtle references to and jokes about bittersweet cultural, social, and political situations known and experienced all too well by East Central European Rusyns—and frequently revealed by the actors feigning tipsiness required in the scripts—provoked everything from chuckles to outright laughter in the appreciative audience. Next time I would love to see the actors also in a fragment from some dark, somber drama in order to experience another side of their talent.

At the final presentation, two genuine peasant groups from Múcsony and Komlóska in northeastern Hungary performed Rusyn songs. I later heard one European Rusyn express some misgivings about the "amatuer quality" of these groups "straight from the village." But, on the contrary, these groups—one of mixed gender and one of young women—were amazing. Their interesting variant of the Rusyn language, the freshness of their demeanor, the truly genuine folk quality of their voices, their perfect harmony, their sensitivity to each other's voices as they moved along phrase by phrase—all of this represented the very best of our people's natural talent passed on from generation to generation from the earliest times. I urge future congress planners to invite other such groups. Let us never be ashamed of our people's cultural roots.

Finally, a mixed choir from Užhorod, Subcarpathian Rus' performed stirring Rusyn hymns and featured a solo singer in some pieces. Along with the choir came what was perhaps the most intriguing performer of the entire congress, a peasant poetess Anastasija Dalida from Mižhirja (formerly Volovoje). Dressed in a brilliant white scarf, blouse, and skirt with a bright red vest and apron sprinkled with a green leaf pattern, and brandishing an evergreen branch and small tied-up bundle of soil from Subcarpathian Rus', she boldly strode upon the stage immediately commanding the audience's attention. Declaiming her poetry of love for her homeland and for the Rusyn people, shouting her lines, and reaching out to the audience, she instantly became the center of our rapt attention. The poet, the choir, and all of us concluded this extraordinary program with a rousing rendition of Duchnovyč's hymns, "Subcarpathian Rusyns, Arise!" and "I was, am, and will remain a Rusyn."

To come away from all of this to my final words here is not easy, for I know that this last subject may come as a surprise to you. After long and difficult consideration, we have decided to cease publication of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* after the next issue, winter 1997. The *C-RA*, we believe, has fulfilled its major goal over the past twenty years of bringing Rusyn identity, culture, and history to the attention of Rusyn Americans and students of Slavic studies, especially at a time when there were no equivalent sources of information. Happily, during the last decades several Rusyn organizations and publications have appeared in the European homeland. Also, the Carpatho-Rusyn Society and its publication, *The New Rusyn Times*, as well as the Rusin Association with its publication *Trembita* came into being and today both are thriving in the United States as is a web site, *Carpatho-Rusyn Knowledge Base*, on the Internet. These two publications, along with the web site, not to mention the many publications available from the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, are superb sources of information and we urge you to take advantage of them.

The production of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* has always required a great deal of time and expertise, the mastery of several Slavic languages, and the ability to write and translate. In other words it demands a voluntary staff with special abilities, and such people are at present no longer available. Our ceasing publication does not, however, mean that the *C-RA* need lie dormant forever. More on this and a final word in my last editorial in the next issue.

PETRO HATALJAK (1885-1949)



Petro Hataljak was born June 25, 1885, in the village of Berdychiv in the former Austrian province of Galicia. After graduating from high school in 1908, he left for the capital of the Habsburg Empire where he entered both the Commercial Academy and the Department of Jurisprudence at the University of Vienna. Illness forced him to return briefly to Galicia, and from there he went on to Saint Petersburg, then capital of the Russian Empire, where he was recruited for work in the Russian Far East by an immigration agent. He soon became disillusioned, however, and later admitted in his still unpublished autobiography, that "in view of the permafrost, I cannot recommend the free land offered to me for the resettlement of our workers who are accustomed to a different climate."

During the next few years, Hataljak worked as an accountant for various businesses in L'viv, the administrative center of Galicia. Soon after World War I broke out in 1914, he came under suspicion for his Russophile sympathies, was arrested by the Austrian authorities, and was sent to a prison at Terezin in Bohemia. About the same time his father was sent to an Austrian internment camp at Talerhof. Hataljak managed to escape and made his way to the United States. In New York, he founded the Union for the Liberation of Carpathian Rus', and he organized the Russian Congress which on July 13, 1917 passed a resolution demanding the unification of Subcarpathian Rus', Galicia, and Bukovina with Russia. This resolution, however, was eventually overturned when the majority of Rusyn-American immigrants voted in favor of joining their homeland to the new state of Czechoslovakia. Hataljak was bitterly disappointed, although later he agreed that unity with Czechoslovakia was the best solution for the Rusyn people.

Hataljak soon returned to Europe and settled in Subcarpathian Rus', where he married a Hungarian woman, Etelka Mészáros, granddaughter of the nineteenth-century historian of Subcarpathian Rus' and the city of Užhorod, Károly Mészáros. The couple resided for a long time in Mukačevo where Hataljak worked in the Rusyn Bank, and then they moved to Užhorod. Although Hataljak remained outside of any political activity during the interwar years, his writings—*The Financial Situation in Subcarpathian Rus'* (1933), and *Czechs and Carpatho-Rusyns* (1935)—do reflect his on-going interest in political and economic developments.

Hataljak also demonstrated his literary talents. While still in New York City, he published a collection of poems and stories in Russian entitled, *Na oltar'* otčizny (On the Altar of the Homeland, 1917). The poems concern primarily Galician cultural activists, although one of them, "Hungarian Rus'," is about the Subcarpathian Rusyn national awakener Aleksander Duchnovyč. Hataljak wrote about his love for his homeland and expressed the hope that the "dark years" were coming to an end, for "Mighty Rus' is bringing a banner to you [Subcarpathian Rus']." This banner, he thought, would be the flag of brotherhood and freedom. Such a declaration on his part reflected his political views and was cast in the style of those times. Hataljak's stories contain similar autobiographical elements.

Hataljak was multilingual and lived briefly not only in the United States and Russia, but also in France, Portugal, Switzerland, Italy, and even China. By the time World War II engulfed Europe, Hataljak was back in Subcarpathian Rus' which was under Hungarian occupation. He was viewed by the authorities with suspicion for his Russophile leanings. Neither was fate kind to him in the first years after the war ended and Subcarpathian Rus' was annexed to the Soviet Union. When he died on September 29, 1948, at the age of 64, his unexpected passing was subsequently thought to be the result of poisoning by a KGB secret agent during a routine hospital check-up for heart problems. As we now know for sure, KGB laboratories produced various toxic substances which were approved for use by the agents in Subcarpathian Rus' in the first years after the war.

Among the unpublished works that Hataljak left at his death was a 96-page typed manuscript "With My Face to the Great Ocean." He was inspired by the idea of shoring up the Bering Strait with a damn in order to change the climate of the Russian Far East. As strange as it may seem, he even suggested that atomic energy could be used to heat the waters of the Arctic Ocean. Hataljak gave his project to the Soviet government, and it is my guess that this is what attracted the attention of the KGB. After all, here was an individual writing about atomic energy precisely at the time when both the Soviet Union and the United States were working on the atomic bomb. They may have also asked why this strange character from Užhorod was so interested in the strategic Bering Strait. Hence, the KGB saw no choice but to get him out of the way.

Petro Hataljak was a writer, a politician, and a visionary. And although he has been overlooked by Soviet and present-day Ukrainian historians, he should not be forgotten in our people's history.

Volodymyr Fedynyšynec'
Užhorod

RUSYNS IN ROMANIA

The author of this article, Tom Trier, is an ethnographer from Denmark. He is a long-time member of the Rusin Association in Minnesota, whose president Larry Goga suggested many years ago that he try to find out whether there were any Carpatho-Rusyns still living in Romania. Trier not only took up this challenge, he also visited Rusyns in neighboring countries, completed recently a film about Andy Warhol, and in November 1997 arranged in conjunction with the Danish Cultural Institute a Week of Rusyn Culture in Copenhagen. At present he is beginning a doctoral program at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, where he is writing on the image of Andy Warhol as a symbol of the recent Rusyn national revival.—Editor

When I first saw Dr. Paul R. Magocsi's detailed map of the Carpatho-Rusyn settlement last year, I studied the villages in Romania with particular interest insofar as this region probably is the least researched area seen in a Carpatho-Rusyn context. Until now, the only contact with Rusyns in Romania which I had was with Jaroslava Kolotilo, a functionary of Rusyn background in the Romanian Ministry of Culture, who attended the Second World Congress of Rusyns in Krynica in 1993 (see the interview with Mrs. Kolotilo in *Narodnŷ novinkŷ*, June 16, 1993, or in English translation in *Trembita*, Vol. 5, No. 5). When in April 1997 I had a chance to go to Romania I decided to visit the northern Carpathians in order to get an impression of this little known part of the Rusyn-inhabited homeland.

Having studied several works on the Rusyns in Subcarpathian Rus', especially the authoritative *Shaping of a National Identity* by Paul Robert Magocsi, I knew about the existence of a small number of Rusyn villages in the southern part of the Máramaros region (Romanian: Maramureş; Rusyn: Maramoroš) referred to in the Austro-Hungarian censuses in 1900 and 1910. The inhabitants of these villages were separated from their fellow Rusyns north of the Tysa River after World War I, when the former Hungarian county of Máramaros was split between Czechoslovakia (Subcarpathian Rus') and Romania. Romania's presence in the area goes back to August 1916, when a treaty of alliance was signed in Bucharest between Romania and the Entente. In return for joining the war against Germany and Austria-Hungary, the Kingdom of Romania would be given free reign by the victorious Entente to annex Hungarian territories with a Romanian population, including Bukovina, the Banat, Transylvania, and Máramaros/Maramureş. Later attempts on the part of the Allied Powers, not to mention Hungary, to narrow the extent of Romania's claims were largely unsuccessful.

In the climate of political chaos that prevailed after the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, independent "national councils" were formed in several towns to decide the future. National councils also met in Máramaros county. Contrary to the pro-Hungarian, pro-Czechoslovak, and independence tendencies that predominated at the same time within the Rusyn councils of Užhorod and Prešov further to the west, a council meeting in the town of Chust favored unity with the West Ukrainian People's Republic that had come into being in eastern Galicia to the north of the Carpathian ridge. Another council in the Subcarpathian village of Jasynja, which had strong pro-Ukrainian sympathies, declared in January 1919 an independent Hucul republic which was to last for six months until in June the Romanian army occupied all of Máramaros county.

It was not so much the preferences of these councils as the interests of international politics that determined the new border between Subcarpathian Rus' and Romania. In the eyes of the Allies, the incorporation of Subcarpathian Rus' into the new Czechoslovak state seemed, in terms of geopolitics, the only reasonable solution. Such a solution not only took into account the claims of the Rusyn national councils in the western parts of the Carpathian region, but also the interests of the Rusyn-American immigrants. As far as the Maramureş region was concerned, Czechoslovakia was interested in having access to a land bridge to Romania which at the same time would eliminate the possibility of a common border between Hungary and Poland. Hence, in spite of its military presence in Máramaros county north of the Tysa River, Romania was not to permitted to annex this part of the county, since it largely lacked an ethnic Romanian population.

In July 1920, the Czechoslovak government and the Allies finally succeeded in pressuring the Romanians to withdraw to the lines stipulated by an international territorial commission (and confirmed in the treaties of St. Germain and Trianon) at the Paris Peace Conference. Accordingly, Subcarpathian Rus', including the northern part of Máramaros county, was recognized in international law as part of Czechoslovakia. As for Romania, its new borders did not follow ethnic criteria, even though the principle of the people's right to self-determination had been one of the main goals at the Paris Peace Conference. Nearly two million Magyars/Hungarians were left within Romania's new boundaries as well as more than half a million Ukrainians. With regard to Máramaros county, the Tysa River was chosen as an appropriate natural frontier between Subcarpathian Rus' and Romania, since it roughly separated the Slavic Rusyns to the north from the Romanians and Hungarians to the south. Four Romanian and several Hungarian villages were, nevertheless, left on the Czechoslovak side, whereas a dozen Slavic villages south of the Tysa ended up in Romania. These villages thereby became, at least politically and administratively, separated from the major part of the Subcarpathian region by a new international border along the Tysa and farther to the east by the peaks of the high mountains in the Hucul region.

Divided villages

Nowadays not only the Romanian boundary but also the railroad track from Bucharest to Sighetul Marmaţiei runs for a while along the Tysa River. During my journey to the Maramureş region, I enjoyed the company of a certain Mr. Baran, a native of the village of Luh (Romanian: Lunca la Tisa). Mr. Baran gave me a personal account of the troubled waters of the Tysa, on the banks of which his village is situated. After World War I the villages of Velykŷj Byčkiv (Romanian: Bocicoiu Mare) and Luh were divided along the river between Subcarpathian Rus' in Czechoslovakia and Romania. Initially, the border had little effect on the life of the villagers, who continued their daily affairs without taking particular notice of this political line. It was not until after World War II that a real frontier split the villages of Romania and what was by then Soviet Transcarpathia. From

then on the river was regularly patrolled by Soviet and Romanian border guards and trespassers severely punished. In the case of Mr. Baran's family, his brother lived on the northern, that is to say the Soviet bank, and as a result he lost the contact with his relatives for more than 40 years. Although relatives could see each other and shout to each other across the river at any time of the day, visits were nearly impossible. If visits were arranged, the visitor from Romania first had to travel the long way to the Soviet consulate in Iaşi, then from there northward to Černivci in Soviet Ukraine, and then back westward to the northern bank of the Tysa in Transcarpathia. In other words, a detour of more than 500 miles. The aging Mr. Baran first met his brother again in 1988, when Gorbachev's reform policy of *perestroika* found its way to the Carpathians.

Today the Ukrainian-Romanian frontier crossings are open. Although the villages along the Tysa remain politically divided, a crossing point for car traffic has been established near Tjačiv and an international train connecting Sighetul Marmaţiei in Romania to Rachiv in Transcarpathia now passes the border at the village of Poljana. Due to the topography of the Tysa valley there is but one railroad track along the river—on the Romanian bank. This track not only carries Romanian trains, but also Ukrainian trains on transit through Romanian territory from Tjačiv to Rachiv. Ironically, this transit route was also in use during the Communist era, when the border was otherwise all but hermetically shut.

The Ukrainians of Romania

During World War II the Soviet Union annexed the former Romanian-held territories of northern Bukovina and Bessarabia. Romania was therefore left with only small Ukrainian-inhabited enclaves in southern Bukovyna, Dobruja, the Banat, and Maramureş. The Soviet Army also attempted to appropriate the Maramureş region in 1944, but for reasons yet unknown these efforts ended in the spring of 1945. After the Communist takeover of Romania in 1947, the borders were closed and the country's national minorities were now regimented both politically and ideologically. Following Soviet guidelines, the Romanian authorities considered Rusyns and Ukrainians to be the same people and therefore identified the East Slavic inhabitants of the Maramureş region as Ukrainian. Although the Ukrainians along with other minorities were formally recognized, their opportunities for cultural and political self-expression were subjected to strict control by the new regime.



Typical street scene in Rus'-Poljany with Carpathian Mountains in background. (photo by Tom Trier)

Conditions for minorities as a whole improved somewhat during the 1950s. Ukrainian-language schools were allowed in certain villages, and at one point there were 120 Ukrainian schools with an estimated 10,000 pupils. Even a Department of Ukrainian Language and Literature was established at the University of Bucharest, which still functions to this day. Beginning in 1960 and particularly from the ascent to power of Nicolae Ceauçescu in 1965, efforts to assimilate Romania's national minorities increased, and an aggressive policy aimed on the dissolution of their collective identities was introduced.

It was only in the wake of the December 1989 revolution that the population of Romania was relieved from harsh totalitarian rule, and the situation of the national minorities considerably improved. Tense relations, especially between the Romanian authorities and the large Roma (Gypsy) and even larger Hungarian minority (some eight percent of Romania's population of 23 million) continue. Despite the reluctance of the Romanian government, Ukrainians and other minorities have since the Revolution of 1989 gained certain rights. Minority groups have been allowed to open new schools, build their own churches, and establish a range of cultural and political organizations. In the national elections held in 1992 and 1996, each of the minority parties was guaranteed a seat in parliament, including a representative of the Ukrainian Democratic Party of Romania.

Ukrainian organizations also participate in the work of the Council of National Minorities, which also includes a variety of other national groups with official status in the country: Hungarians, Roma (Gypsies), Germans, Serbs, and the small groups of Bulgarians, Tatars, Slovaks, Croats, Russian Lipovans, Turks, Jews, Greeks, Armenians, Poles, and Albanians. Each minority is represented by three members in the council, but general discontent among the minority representatives prevails. Less than six months after the National Minority Council was established, in March 1993, the Hungarian organizations withdrew their representatives, arguing that the council was little more than an instrument of propaganda for the Romanian government. The other minority groups have, however, remained members. The most important goal for the minorities now is the establishment of a Ministry of Minority Affairs in the Romanian government and the ratification of a law that would guarantee collective minority rights in accordance with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Romania's relations with the newly independent Republic of Ukraine are as problematic as with the Soviet Union before the collapse of communism. The possible return of the territories that were annexed by the Soviets during World War II has been debated in the Romanian parliament more than once, and since this issue remains unresolved nationalist political parties have opposed the passing of a friendship treaty with Ukraine. Territorial claims are also bolstered by the presence of some 135,000 Romanians living in compact communities in Ukraine near its border with Romania. Both countries claim their fellow nationals face discrimination, but despite the controversies

between Bucharest and Kiev negotiations are still continuing on a bilateral treaty to settle national and territorial issues.

Where are the Rusyns?

The present number of Ukrainians (including Rusyns) in Romania varies between the official figures of 66,000 (according to the census of 1992) and estimates that range from 150,000 to 300,000 in the Ukrainian press. The latter seem to be heavily exaggerated. There are no separate figures for the Rusyn population, but it is noteworthy that the Romanian censuses at least mention Ruthenians (Rusyns) and Huculs alongside Ukrainians in one common category, thus at least indicating the presence of Rusyns in Romania. This is in contrast to certain other states in East Central Europe, where the very existence of Rusyns is completely ignored.

The Rusyn-inhabited regions in the eastern parts of historic Romania (Bessarabia, Dobruja, and Bukovina) were during the rise of national ideologies from the latter part of the nineteenth century more influenced by Ukrainian nationalism than the western regions, (Maramureş, Banat). Moreover, during the era of Communist rule in Romania no attempts to organize Rusyns in Romania were made. With this in mind, I was eager to get a first-hand impression during my visit of the present state of the ethnic aspirations of the East Slavic villagers in the Maramureş region. Would they consider themselves Ukrainian or, against all odds, possibly Rusyn? And to what extent would they have assimilated into the dominant Romanian culture?

I arrived in Sighetul Marmaţiei, the northernmost town of Romania near the border with Transcarpathian Ukraine, on what I was told was the first sunny day of the spring. The snow had only disappeared from the fields a week earlier. In Rona de Sus (Rusyn: Vyšnja Runa), the first village I was about to visit, the dirt roads were still muddy in the cold April morning. As I made my way into the village on foot, I immediately felt welcome when an old man greeted with the words *Dobre rano.* Vyšnja Runa is a large village inhabited by over 3,000 people. Remarkably, there are relatively few Romanians or other non-Slavic dwellers and, as I was to discover later, this is also the case in most other neighboring Rusyn villages.

Eventually I made my way to Professor Pavlo Romanjuk, a poet and writer who works as a teacher of Ukrainian language and literature in the local village school. It was only by chance that I had managed to get in touch with him. In a recent issue of the magazine *Rusyn* (No. 3-4, 1996), I read excerpts from a novel written by Romanjuk in the local vernacular. Knowing his name and the village in which he lived, I was able to trace his address and telephone number through the Romanian telephone information service. Romanjuk kindly invited me to stay at his house in his picturesque native village during my visit to Romania's Maramureş region.

Pavlo Romanjuk, 44, is married and has two sons. He is the author of four collections of poetry and a novel—all written in literary Ukrainian. He is currently busy working on a novel, which, as he said, he is writing *po-našemu.* He is also the author of a new Romanian-Ukrainian/Ukrainian-Romanian phrasebook, and a member of both the Romanian and Ukrainian writers' unions. Since 1996 he has been studying as a Ph.D. candidate in Ukrainian literature at the University of Černivci in Ukraine. The theme of his dissertation is the work of the early twentieth-century writers, Ol'ha Kobyljans'ka and Sylvestr Jaričevskyj, both from the historic region of Bukovina that in the twentieth century has been disputed by Romania and Ukraine. In his leisure time Romanjuk plays in an amateur folk ensemble that performs in the village dialect. There are a number of such groups in the Rusyn-inhabited region of Romania, he told me. Some perform in the local language, others in Ukrainian, and still others with a mixed repertoire.

To the Hucul Region

Professor Romanjuk suggested we make a trip to the eastern part of Maramureş where the Huculs live. Romanjuk was once a teacher in the Hucul villages of Luhei (Rusyn: Luhy) and Poienile de Sub Munte (Rus'-Poljany), so that he was well acquainted with the cultural and political situation in that part of Maramureş. Since he did not have a car, we made our way by whatever means of transportation were available—private cars, buses, trucks, and any other vehicle that would give us a lift for a modest payment. In this way we covered, although at slow speed, the 15 miles to the road that led into the Ruscova River valley, from where we eventually would continue along the only road to the remote and rather inaccessible Hucul villages.

Most of the East Slavic villages in Maramureş are situated along the Tysa River, the Vişeu River, and its tributary, the Ruscova. Due to the gradual expansion of the villages along the rivers, the inhabited areas have to some extent grown together so that several constitute a continuous chain of villages. One such chain is made up of Tisa (Rusyn: Mikovo), Crăciuneşti (Kračunovo), Bocicoiu Mare (Velykŷj Byčkiv), Lunca la Tisa (Luh), together inhabited by some 3500 predominantly East Slavs. Another chain is situated in the Vişeu valley, where the villages of Valea Vişeului (Poljana), Bistra, and Crasna Vişeului (Krasna) are home to another 3500 Slavic residents.

The Hucul villages of Ruscova (Ruskova), Repedea (Rus'-Krŷvŷj), Poienile de sub Munte (Rus'-Poljany) and Luhei (Luhy)—all located in the Ruscova valley—are inhabited by a total of more than 20,000 people. Some villages are large—more than 13,000 people live in Rus'-Poljany alone. The character of these large settlements is rather similar to the Rusyn villages north of the Tysa River in Subcarpathian Rus' (Ukraine's Transcarpathia), with a significant number of traditional peasant wooden houses mixed with modern stone buildings constructed since the 1989 revolution. A significant number of East Slavs also live in Sighetul Marmaţiei, today a busy town of 43,000 inhabitants. Slavs originating from the region are also scattered in Vişeu de Sus, Baia Mare, Bucharest, and other Romanian towns and cities.

A bus took us the last 10 miles to Rus'-Poljany, the principal Hucul village in the Maramureş region. During the drive through the Ruscova valley we passed several scenic Hucul villages tucked between the snow-covered mountains that rose on either side of the narrow road. It was only in the early 1980s that the mountain village of Rus'-Poljany was connected by an asphalt road to the main road

in the Vişeu valley. Before then the connection to the outer world was maintained only by a slow-moving train. This railway was abandoned soon after the road was constructed. In the aftermath of the Revolution of 1989 these villages seem to have become more isolated once again. The public means of transportation have been cut back to an absolute minimum with only two daily buses going to and from Rus'-Poljany. During our visit we almost had to stay overnight in the village until finally one of the very few outbound cars offered us a lift.

Like the Huculs of Rus'-Poljany, most of the East Slavs in Romania are indigenous peasants and shepherds who have had limited opportunities to improve their socioeconomic status. This fact, in addition to the isolated locations of the mountain villages, is probably the primary reason for the relatively limited assimilation of the East Slavs with the Romanian majority population. Needless to say, the Hucul vernacular was heard everywhere, not Romanian or literary Ukrainian.

New and old churches

In the villages of the Hucul region considerable church construction could be observed. Since the Revolution of 1989, a significant number of Ukrainian Orthodox churches have been built in the region and are still being built. Although the villages of the Ruscova valley used to be a stronghold of the Greek Catholic faith, not a single new Greek Catholic church has been erected so far. It seems that worshippers here have not returned to their original faith to the same extent as in Ukraine's Transcarpathia and the Prešov Region of eastern Slovakia. As in those countries, the Greek Catholic church was banned in Romania shortly after the communist takeover and annexed to the Orthodox church. Today there are only three traditional wooden churches left in the entire Maramureş region, two in Rus'-Poljany and one in Rus'-Krŷvŷj. The characteristic Hucul church of Rus'-Poljany with its majestic spire is, however, now being converted to the Greek Catholic faith, since the Orthodox community has built a new church nearby. Also in Sighetul Marmaţiei a room in the town's House of Culture has recently been consecrated for Greek Catholic services.

The language question

During the course of our journey around the Carpathian villages, Professor Romanjuk introduced me to several of his fellow teachers. Our conversations were largely occupied with the language question, which presents similar problems in Romania as for Rusyns elsewhere in the Carpathians. Children are taught Romanian and Ukrainian simultaneously from the first class in primary school. Romanian is generally the language of instruction for most subjects with the exception of a few that can be taught in Ukrainian (or other national minority languages) according to a new 1994 Law on Education. During lessons in these subjects the children are supposed to speak literary Ukrainian and are corrected by the teachers if they switch over to their local dialect. In fact, as Professor Romanjuk explained, children from their early years must learn no fewer than three languages: Rusyn vernacular at home, Ukrainian and Romanian at school. In spite of his fluency in Ukrainian, Romanjuk said he thinks in the Rusyn vernacular, and when writing he first has to translate his thoughts into Ukrainian word for word. His master's thesis at the University of



Eighteenth-century Carpatho-Rusyn wooden church in the village of Rus'-Poljany in Romania. (photo by Tom Trier)

Bucharest examined methods of bilingual teaching, and he is basically dissatisfied with the present state of language instruction.

Romanjuk says he hopes to publish a newspaper in his vernacular. He is connected to a comprehensive network of teachers in most Rusyn villages, who agree on the need to write *po-našemu*. Several of the teachers I met were positively disposed to giving what is now considered a dialect the status of more than just a spoken vernacular, and this includes a Hucul writer and local historian, who otherwise contributes regularly to Ukrainian-American periodicals.

The inhabitants of the East Slavic villages in the Maramureş region of Romania are part of a larger Carpatho-Rusyn nationality, and as such are culturally and ethnically related to Rusyns in Ukraine's Transcarpathia as well as in Poland and Slovakia). This, however, is not something about which villagers in the Maramureş region are aware. In short, nobody seems to identify with a larger Carpatho-Rusyn people. When asked about their national affiliation, most people I met promptly replied: Ukrainian. Apparently, there is no debate taking place at this moment on the question of Rusyn versus Ukrainian national affiliation. Intellectuals, too, identify with Ukraine and see themselves as full-fledged Ukrainians. When asked about their native language, however, many answered: Rusyn.

Ukrainian and/or Rusyn?

Today all the villages in the Maramureş region of Romania marked on Professor Magocsi's map still exist, and apparently each has a majority population of indigenous East Slavs. According to figures provided by local intellectuals, there are currently some 30,000-35,000 primarily indigenous East Slavs living in these villages and another 20,000-25,000 elsewhere in the country, including seven rural villages in the Banat region of southwestern Romania.

Not surprisingly, it is first urban dwellers that have been—and still are—exposed to processes of assimilation into mainstream Romanian culture, whereas the villagers more likely identify with Ukrainians. Only a few seem to consider themselves Rusyn in terms of ethnic affiliation, despite many more who claim that the Rusyn language is their mother tongue.

Most probably we will not witness the emergence of a forceful Rusyn movement in the region. A significant part of the region's East Slavic intelligentsia is more likely to maintain what during the past 80 years or more has developed into an explicitly Ukrainian identity. The Ukrainians are well established as a national minority in Romania with their own cultural and political organizations, a publishing house, a range of periodicals in Ukrainian, and even a journal in Romanian. Many pro-Ukrainian intellectuals also maintain ties with Ukrainians in Ukraine and with the Ukrainian diaspora in Germany, the United States, and Canada. In fact, Ukrainian political, cultural, and social organizations in Romania are to some extent financially supported by the Ukrainian diaspora.

On the other hand, it is quite likely that the incipient contacts with Rusyns in other countries will spark a Rusyn-Ukrainian debate in Romania in the coming years. If ethnic identity is perceived as subject to change according to altering realities, then the East Slavic population of Romania's Carpathian region might also—at least in part—change its ethnic orientation. This could happen particularly if a Rusyn ethno-cultural movement would have something special to offer the people under the current circumstances.

One benefit could be the creation of a literary Rusyn language and the official recognition of such a language in Romania. The fact that such aspirations are prevalent elsewhere in the Carpathians may serve as a source of inspiration to the East Slavs of Maramureş and possibly fulfil a long felt need. This does not, of course, mean that a Rusyn movement in Romania would necessarily evolve like Rusyn movements in other countries. Rusyns in Romania might adopt other ethnic or regionalistic strategies. One thing does seem certain, however. Whatever form a possible Rusyn movement assumes will not be greeted with enthusiasm by the existing Ukrainian organizations in Romania. Since the present Romanian nationality policy recognizes minorities of even the smallest size, such as the Poles (4200 in 1992) and the Armenians (2000), Rusyn ethnic or cultural organizations might also have a chance to achieve the status of a minority in their own right. It still remains to be seen whether a viable need for this actually exists.

My visit to Romania was very brief, and my sources of information in the field were random and somewhat limited. My observations of the present ethno-national situation primarily derive from conversations with a small number of intellectuals in the region. These observations are not the result of extensive fieldwork in Romania, but are a reflection of my initial and firsthand impression of the region, which I have found worth sharing with others. To be sure, further studies in the fields of history and sociology remain to be conducted on the situation of the Rusyns and Ukrainians of Romania.

Tom Trier
Copenhagen, Denmark

Postscript

Among the speakers at an international colloquium on Rusyn minorities in east-central Europe held on November 8, 1990 in conjunction with the Week of Rusyn Culture in Copenhagen were the Ambassador of Romania, Dr. Grete Tartier Tabaraşi and Pavlo Romanjuk. The ambassador stated that according to current Romanian law, every citizen of Romania has the right to identify with any nationality and that the government would consider providing recognition and assitance to Rusyns, regardless of size. Romanjuk reported on the plans he and several of his Rusyn colleagues have of establishing a Rusyn-language newspaper in Romania called *Pradid*. For further information or to assist in these efforts, write to: Profesor Paul Romaniuc, com. Rona de Sus nr. 626, jud. Maramureş, ROMANIA. Fax: 40-62-31-76-36.

PUBLICATIONS IN ENGLISH ABOUT CARPATHO-RUSYNS, 1994

Items available from the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center are indicated as such. Others can be obtained on request through Interlibrary Loan at many local libraries or directly from research libraries of major universities (California at Berkeley, Harvard, Illinois at Champaign Urbana, Indiana, Toronto, Yale) or from the Cleveland Public Library, Library of Congress, and New York Public Library.—Editor

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THE MISSION OF THE CARPATHO-RUSYN SOCIETY AMONG RUSYNS IN AMERICA

The following remarks were presented by Richard D. Custer, a member of the delegation from the United States at the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns in Budapest, June 1, 1997. The original text was delivered in Rusyn.—Editor

To be standing here as a delegate from America is something which ten years ago I could never have even imagined. Ten years ago, at age seventeen, I had only begun to discover my Rusyn heritage. My mother's parents left their tiny Rusyn villages "under the Dukla Pass" at the beginning of this century to start a new life in America. They met and married in New Jersey, and moved to Pennsylvania a few years later. My grandfather, a coal miner, died at fifty-five years of age, leaving my grandmother and fourteen children, the youngest of whom was my mother. Although my Rusyn grandmother went to her eternal rest when I was only eight years old, my memories of her and the small seed of Rusyn identity she gave me through my mother have blossomed into a flower which today greatly enriches my life. I am now learning my Rusyn mother tongue and I help others like myself to discover or to understand better their Rusyn heritage by serving as a trustee of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society [based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania] and as editor of its magazine, *The New Rusyn Times*.

But an important piece of my heritage was missing until summer of last year, when, along with thirty-three other members of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society, I was finally able to visit the land of my grandparents' birth, our beautiful Carpathian Rus'. As I walked on the same ground my ancestors walked, crossed the stream which flows through my grandmother's village, and sang a hymn in the very church—a traditional Rusyn wooden church—where my ancestors prayed and attained their eternal salvation for centuries past, I finally realized the full meaning of the word "heritage."

Heritage is what our organization, the Carpatho-Rusyn Society, is all about. Our organization faces many of the same challenges which confront Rusyns wherever they may live. The division of the Rusyn mainstream into Greek Catholic and Orthodox religious orientations began in America and was tragically transported to the Rusyn homeland. Our organization has begun to heal these divisions in terms of Rusyns coming together to share our common culture. We have as members not only both Greek Catholics and Orthodox, but also Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and even those of no religion, Rusyns and non-Rusyns alike, who in some way value the Rusyn heritage. The theme of unity which our organization presents is further demonstrated by the fact that Rusyn Americans of all regional backgrounds—whether their roots are in Subcarpathian Rus', eastern Slovakia, the Lemko and Bojko regions, or the Vojvodina—belong to our organization. We have also bridged the gaps of age and gender with our youngest members under ten years old, and our oldest near ninety. Women as well as men serve as officers and trustees, and we have as members recent Rusyn immigrants alongside those of the second, third, fourth, or even fifth generation born in America.



Richard Custer (left), along with Orestes and Katherine Mihaly, at the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns.

Another challenge which seems to survive only in America is that of our name. Rusyns in America have seemingly dozens of names, most of which lead some Rusyn Americans to believe that they are perhaps Russian, or Slovak, Ukrainian, Czech, Austro-Hungarian, "Slavish," or even "Byzantine." Because of this unusual situation, educating Rusyn Americans who are confused or even misled about their ethnic identity is one of the primary missions of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society.

Yet another mission is to explore traditional and new ways of celebrating and living Rusyn culture. Our Society holds a late summer picnic, a traditional Christmas Eve supper during the Christmas season, social and educational meetings, and an annual summer tour of the Rusyn homeland. We are planning a national Rusyn folk festival and the creation of one or more Rusyn performing folk ensembles. If success is measured in terms of numbers, then we have 700 members in the United States and Canada to show our success, and we continue to average one new member every day.

A further measure of success is the evolution of the content of *The New Rusyn Times* from mostly information about the Rusyn homeland and articles about Rusyn history and culture, to mostly news of Rusyn community actvities in America and many stories of members' discovering their Rusyn heritage and feeling excited with each new experience which the Society makes possible for them. We are happy to say that on the whole we have good relations with other ethnic organizations, Ukrainian, Slovak, Polish, Hungarian, Jewish, and others.

The Carpatho-Rusyn Society also looks to the future, and proof of this is the fact that its members have established a significant Rusyn presence on the internet called the Carpatho-Rusyn Knowledge Base [see the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, Vol. XIX, No. 1, 1996, p. 8]. The internet continues to provide outstanding opportunities for the free exchange of information and news among Rusyns worldwide. Since it was started over two years ago, the Carpatho-Rusyn Knowledge Base has continued to grow at a steady rate. Internet contact with Rusyns in Poland and Slovakia has been established this year, and it is our sincere hope that

these contacts will continue to provide beneficial results for everyone involved. The internet is growing at an astounding rate, with more and more people using it every day. We Rusyns should be proud that we were one of the first ethnic groups to establish a strong presence on the World Wide Web. Through the internet we receive daily e-mail from people who are grateful to have a source of materials that pertain to their heritage, material they can easily access from their homes 24 hours a day.

The Carpatho-Rusyn Knowledge Base is dedicated to providing a free forum where Rusyns all over the world can place information—current news, historical information, scholarly papers, etc.—for anyone to read. It is very important that people can easily discover and learn about our culture and history. And our site's success is made possible by the involvement of many Rusyns worldwide who offer new material for the site. Such cooperation is much appreciated! We look forward to having other Rusyn organizations involved in the future. We are proud to be involved in this service to our Rusyn brothers and sisters and we have plans to improve our already useful service. Anyone interested in placing materials on our web site should speak to me. I will give you the electronic mail addresses and postal addresses to which you may submit materials for the site [http://www.carpatho-rusyn.org.carpatho].

Customarily, ethnic groups in the United States have relied on new immigrants to keep their communities vibrant. Rusyns in America have not been fortunate in this respect. Rusyn immigration to America virtually ended in 1938. Since the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, however, there has been a small but steady stream of Rusyn immigrants especially from eastern Slovakia. It is well known that there are many Rusyns from the villages of Litmanová, Kamionka, and Jarabina—all near Stará L'ubovňa—who have come to America and now live in New York (especially Brooklyn) and New Jersey. Unfortunately, instead of becoming a part of existing Rusyn communities there, these immigrants have in large part become active members of the Slovak-American community and of various Slovak-American organizations. We might say that they have become Slovaks only after leaving Slovakia.

My main contact with these new immigrants has been at an annual Greek Catholic pilgrimage in Pennsylvania. In September of last year I also went to one of their largest secular gatherings, the Festival Slovenského Dedicstva, an annual event in the state of New Jersey. The festival opened with a Byzantine Catholic Divine Liturgy served by local Greek Catholic clergy, assisted by some Slovak Roman Catholic priests. The liturgy was celebrated mostly in Church Slavonic, but the main celebrant, the pastor of St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic church in Manville, New Jersey, sang all his parts in Slovak. This is absolutely unheard of anywhere in the United States. There is not one Greek Catholic or Orthodox church in the entire United States where the Slovak language is used. Even the so-called "Slovak Byzantine Catholic Eparchy" in Canada uses only English and Church Slavonic.

Since this priest's parish has many Rusyn parishioners who are immigrants from Litmanová, I asked him if he ever uses Slovak in his church there. He said he hadn't yet, but did have plans to start doing so. "Why?" I asked. "Surely not for the Rusyns from Litmanová?" "What Rusyns?" he said, adding that "they are Slovaks." I repeated that many of his parishioners were in fact Rusyns, to which he replied that "perhaps they are Rusyns, but they speak only Slovak and they don't understand Church Slavonic." Is it not time, I wondered, for the entire Divine Liturgy to be translated into the Rusyn literary language for use in Orthodox and Greek Catholic parishes in Slovakia? Then there will be no more excuse for introducing Slovak into the service based on some premise that "the people do not understand Church Slavonic."

These new immigrants have also become involved in the artistic expression of their culture. The Limbora Slovak Folk Ensemble was established in 1966 and is dedicated to the authentic presentation of Slovak folk culture throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. In the list of members, however, one immediately recognizes the following Rusyn names: Benyo, Kočerha, Matoljak, Sikorjak-Turkynjak, Čobor, Koneval. Many of the dances are typical eastern Slovak dances. The only specifically Rusyn material is an occasional Rusyn folksong, although these are never identified as Rusyn or Rusnak, only as "eastern Slovak."

A smaller ensemble, Vychodna Dolina, also in New York City, is made up entirely of these same Rusyn immigrants and their American-born children, and even though they perform Rusyn songs almost exclusively, they describe and promote themselves as a Slovak folk ensemble. Some of these recent immigrants have told me that they would like to know our history and learn more about our culture, which shows they realize that they are not just a subgroup of Slovaks, and that we can call our own all the things which make each nationality distinct. Perhaps this could be the most tangible proof I have that, when engaged in conversation long enough, even these Rusyns who have thickly clothed themselves with a Slovak identity know deep down in their heart of hearts that they are Rusyns.

There is some good news, however. A number of other recent Rusyn immigrants, including Rusyns from Slovakia and in particular Lemko Rusyns from Poland, have become enthusiastic and valuable members of our organization. At this time we have met only a very few recent immigrants from Subcarpathian Rus', of whom most seem to be convinced Ukrainians. The phenomenon of new immigrants presents our Carpatho-Rusyn Society and the Rusyn communities in the United States and Canada with a special challenge: How can we provide a place in our Rusyn family for new arrivals? The success or failure of our response to this challenge will be an important determining factor in the future shape of the Rusyn community in America.

The hopes of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society for the international Rusyn community are primarily the preservation and cultivation of our language, an understanding of our common history (which goes far beyond the borders of any single country), and hopefully a shared culture and identity. Rusyns in America are proud of their Rusyn heritage! The Rusyn community in America is growing! The Carpatho-Rusyn Society looks forward to many more years of building up the Rusyn community in America and cooperating with our fellow Rusyn organizations elsewhere for the benefit of the Rusyn people worldwide. I leave you with the heartfelt prayer from one of our renowned poets: "Bože Výšnij, Otče narodov, spasy Tebi virnŷch Rusynov" (O God on high, Father of all peoples, deign to save the faithful Rusyns).

Richard D. Custer
Hershey, Pennsylvania

RESOLUTIONS OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONGRESS OF RUSYNS

1. The World Congress acknowledges that the republics of Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia have all recognized Rusyns as a distinct people. Ukraine, unfortunately, has not taken this step, and thus has violated both the General Agreement of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe regarding the protection of national minorities, as well as its own constitution. Therefore, the World Congress appeals to the government of Ukraine and its representatives to recognize Rusyns as a distinct national minority and to respect the results of the national referendum of 1991 in Transcarpathia [see the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, Vol. XV, No. 1, 1992, pp. 10-11].

2. The World Congress calls on representatives of the United Nations and the European Council to use their authority in helping to achieve human rights for Rusyns according to European standards at the end of the twentieth century.

3. The World Congress calls on the national parliaments of the countries in which Rusyns reside to adjust their legislatures to allow for a minimum of one Rusyn member with the legal right to represent the Rusyn community in parliament, a practice [regarding minorities] common in the parliaments of other countries.

4. The World Congress calls on the clergy of the Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches to follow the example of the nineteenth-century national awakeners who became bearers of the Rusyn spiritual revival, and to strive by their own example to eliminate those negative tendencies which are not to the advantage of Rusyns of either denomination. Spiritual Fathers, help us to preserve our Church Slavonic liturgy and Cyrillic alphabet as the basic characteristics of our people's identity.

5. The World Congress recalls with sorrow the fiftieth anniversary of the tragedy of the Rusyns (Lemkos) of Poland—the Vistula Operation—so that this sad event might serve as a reminder for present and future generations [see the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, Vol. X, No. 1, 1987, pp. 5-12]. We request that the government of the Republic of Poland and its representatives not only acknowledge the Vistula Operation as unjust, but also take concrete steps to compensate for the moral and material losses incurred by the Rusyns (Lemkos) as a result of the operation.

6. The World Congress remembers Rusyns and other peoples of Subcarpathian Rus' who were victims of the brutal violence suffered in concentration camps at Rachiv (1938) and Svaljava (1945). Along with this, the congress condemns the Fierlinger-Molotov Pact [between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union in 1945] as a violation of international law.

7. The World Congress has agreed that the Fifth World Congress of Rusyns should take place in 1999 in Ukraine, in the former Subcarpathian Rus'.

Budapest, Hungary
June 1, 1997

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONGRESS OF RUSYNS

The Fourth World Congress of Rusyns recommends:

1. That the Interregional Executive of the World Council of Rusyns visit the highest officials of the governments of Ukraine, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and the Czech Republic in order to discuss with them the most pressing problems of the Rusyns in their respective countries.

2. That the leading representatives of Rusyn national organizations which are members of the World Council of Rusyns work toward achieving the recognition of Rusyns as a distinct national minority in every country in which they live so that they might have the right to call themselves Rusyns and that in the official population censuses there be a separate category for Rusyn identity.

3. That the Interregional Executive of the World Council of Rusyns insure the publication of an anthology of Rusyn prose and a *Concise Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture* before the Fifth World Congress of Rusyns, and assist scholars in the preparation of a general history of Rusyns.

4. That the Interregional Executive of the World Council of Rusyns and leading representatives of Rusyn national and socio-cultural organizations promote and support the study of the Rusyn language and culture in schools.

5. That the Interregional Executive of the World Council of Rusyns create a financial fund for the World Congress.

Budapest, Hungary
June 1, 1997

OUR FRONT COVER

Peasant poetess Anastasija Dalida from Mižhirja in Transcarpathia, Ukraine, declaiming her poetry at the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns. (photo by Richard Custer)

A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

The *Carpatho-Rusyn American* (ISSN 0749-9213) is a quarterly publication of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center Inc., a non-profit cultural organization whose purpose is to promote knowledge about all aspects of Carpatho-Ruysn culture through the publication and distribution of scholarly and educational material about the Carpatho-Rusyn heritage in Europe and America.

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A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Heritage



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FROM THE EDITOR

In preparing this editorial for the last issue of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, I distributed copies from our first few years beginning in the spring of 1978 around on my desk top. They were color coded then—spring green, beige, gray, sky blue—until we eventually chose a consistent bold white. The publication was only seven pages long, and to an experienced eye it is in retrospect clear that we were experimenting with the shape of the content and format.

How best could we accomplish our goal of conveying information on the life and cultural and historical heritage of Carpatho-Rusyns? How could we reach Americans of Carpatho-Rusyn background who were curious about their roots? How could we stimulate curiosity in others who had almost lost touch with those roots? Such questions were ever present in our editorial meetings.

Finally, the task of writing the first editorial was at hand. I sat alone before a typewriter in my small dormitory room at Columbia University in New York City. As I waited for inspiration, the room filled with the presence of my immigrant grandparents and the spirit of countless individuals like them. The time for this undertaking is now, they urged, and you must start with us. You must tell our story, and in telling it fully you will find yourself going beyond us more than you can ever imagine. You will travel back to explore our history, and at the same time you will excite the very energies which will propel our people forward into the future so that our name and identity will not be lost. You will touch the lives of our descendants here and you will support the yearnings of the children of our siblings who stayed behind in the European homeland.

I began writing as I was instructed. I hope that I have obeyed my grandparents properly all these past twenty years.

The *C-RA* has in fact touched many lives and has accomplished its goals as the quarterly publication of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center. The founding president of the C-RRC, Professor Paul Robert Magocsi, describes this in detail in his article, **OUR TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY,** in the present issue. Professor Magocsi and I, together with others who have devoted countless volunteer hours and effort toward the production of the *C-RA*, have now made an intentional decision to rechannel this time and energy into other work newly envisioned by the World Congress of Rusyns, including projects within the C-RRC itself.

The center, for instance, will continue to offer additional volumes in our series, Classics of Carpatho-Rusyn Scholarship. Four new books will appear under C-RRC auspices during this twentieth anniversary year (1998), including the unique and outstanding examination of Carpatho-Rusyn folklore by Pëtr G. Bogatyrëv, *Vampires in the Carpathians: Magical Acts, Rites, and Beliefs in Subcarpathian Rus'*. Through our work and with the help of rising young scholars in Europe, new histories, prose, poetry, and folktales, now being written and published in Rusyn, will also eventually be available in English translation.

The spirit of our grandparents was right. We began by exploring history and the immigrant heritage, and in the process of doing so we were moved to shift our focus to events and activities under way in the Rusyn homeland, particularly in light of the radical political changes which took place after the Revolution of 1989. We joined forces with those Rusyn movements which are now shaping the Rusyn historical and cultural consciousness of tomorrow. We have reported on the progress of Rusyns in Slovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Hungary, and have tried to bring to public attention the still difficult plight of Rusyns in Transcarpathia in Ukraine. We encourage the Carpatho-Rusyn Society's publication, *The New Rusyn Times*, to continue providing some of this information for the sake of our people who are still striving to be recognized in their native land.

Carpatho-Rusyn organizations remain at work both in the European homeland and abroad. The Fifth World Congress of Rusyns is being planned, publications in the Rusyn language are available, the Carpatho-Rusyn site on the Internet is thriving, and Rusyn language and literature now have their own distinct subject categories in the Library of Congress. This last achievement is one of the most significant symbolic steps for Rusyns as we come to the end of the twentieth century. It quite simply confirms public recognition of the persistence of will among a people determined to survive and be recognized by others.

Another symbol is the new and impressive statue of the Rusyn national awakener, Aleksander Duchnovyč, which was recently unveiled in front of the Transcarpathian Theater in Užhorod (see **SINCE THE REVOLUTION**). Who could have imagined that in the otherwise difficult political and social conditions for Rusyns in Ukraine's Transcarpathian Region such a symbol could be erected, greeted by an enormous public demonstration singing—alongside the Ukrainian national anthem—the Rusyn anthem penned by Duchnovyč himself? We Rusyns should perhaps be accustomed to such things: the spirit moves in strange ways.

It is time for me to sign off, and also perhaps an appropriate time to extend a heartfelt thanks to those who over the past twenty years have supported us as well as to those who have challenged us, at times even severely. To all of you we are grateful, for by your efforts you knowingly or unknowingly helped us to define ourselves, to see our way even more clearly, to survive, and to grow.

OUR FRONT COVER

Statue of Aleksander Duchnovyč, "the national awakener of the Carpatho-Rusyn people," by Mychajlo Belen', erected in Užhorod, Ukraine, 1997.

ERNEST KONTRATOVYČ



The renowned artist of the Carpathian region, Ernest Kontratovyč, is a direct descendant of the Subcarpathian school of painting established after World War I by Adal'bert Erdeli and Josyp Bokšaj. Kontratovyč was not only a contemporary of the leading Subcarpathian painters of the first half of the twentieth century, he was also one of the group's leading figures. Despite the establishment of Soviet rule in Subcarpathian Rus' in 1945, he never adopted the artistic principles of the totalitarian regime that were known as socialist realism. He neither compromised nor opposed the regime. Perhaps it is for this reason that he was never given any public awards or official recognition until very late in life.

Ernest Kontratovyč was born in 1912 in Kalná Roztoka, a Carpatho-Rusyn village in the former Hungarian Kingdom (Zemplén county) that today is in the far northeastern corner of Slovakia. As the child of elementary school teachers, the young Ernest was destined to follow in the footsteps of his parents and was sent to the Teacher's College in Užhorod. While at the college (1928-1932), he also attended the public school of art founded by Erdeli and Bokšaj. The experience with these two masters was to have a profound influence on the young artist. At first he taught in schools in the area around Užhorod for several years, but before long it was painting that became his true calling in life.

And what did he paint? First and foremost what he saw around him and what he felt inside: the beauties of nature, themes based on local folk legends, depictions of folk customs among Rusyn peasants and shepherds, and scenes of their work in the fields and orchards. There were also, of course, large tableaux of celebrations and festivities. The very titles of paintings—"The Ritual Spring Song" and "The Willow by the Lake" from the 1930s with their many mythological elements, or "Gathering the Sheafs" (1940) and "Picking Apples" (1969)—sum up his best known subjects. He also completed numerous landscapes, village scenes, and views of the highland pastures (*polonyna*) which he loved so much.

Most typical for Carpatho-Rusyn artists during the 1930s and early 1940s was to paint scenes that showed orphans, poverty, and hunger. Kontratovyč's works from this period were filled with these themes as well, such as "The Ukrainian Orphan," "Hunger," "The Burial of a Poor Man," and "A Beggar Under the Willow Tree." Nevertheless, Kontratovyč was in general a monumental artist, and this was particularly evident in his use of color as well as his choice of themes. In works such as "The Wedding" (1968), "Maslo" (1945), "Dances from the Highlands," "Musicians," and "The Wedding Procession," Kontratovyč revealed through his use of vibrant colors the energy of new life as symbolized by the wedding ritual.

Then there are his portraits, including several madonnas with the infant child that he rendered in a series known as the "Transcarpathian Madonnas." From the 1930s down to the present, he depicted the mother with her child either as an isolated portrait or with a mountainous background. Regardless of the subjects he has chosen, Kontratovyč's art has always been embued with a wide range of rich color and a sense of grandeur. Such qualities are present even in those cases where he is stressing through an acute philosophical vision the less inspiring side of human life and nature.

The former totalitarian regime that ruled in Subcarpathian Rus' for nearly half a century after World War II either suppressed rebellious artists like Fedir Manajlo, or simply ignored others like Ernest Kontratovyč. That same regime feared the experimental use of color by Erdeli and accepted only the realist views of Bokšaj, while forgetting entirely the latter's numerous religious subjects.

In the few years since the end of Soviet rule, the Subcarpathian school of painting is still waiting to be fully rediscovered in all its variety like the colors of a rainbow over the Carpathian horizon. One of the colors in that rainbow is the work of Ernest Kontratovyč, to whom we wish the best of health and productivity for many more years to come.

Volodymyr Fedynyšynec'
Užhorod, Ukraine

OUR TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

In 1998, the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center (C-RRC) will celebrate its twentieth anniversary. Throughout its twenty-year existence the C-RRC has never lost focus of its primary goal: to publish and/or distribute scholarly and popular reading materials on all aspects of the history and culture of Carpatho-Rusyns in Europe and America. As a corollary, the C-RRC has sponsored scholarly conferences, donated books and microfilm to libraries and individual scholars, especially in the European homeland, and provided fellowships to individuals from various countries studying Carpatho-Rusyns.

The C-RRC arose out of the particular circumstances in American life during the 1970s. That was the decade of the bicentennial of the United States and a time when the so-called "roots fever" was sweeping the country. Many Americans had by then come to believe that the genius of the United States lay in the cultural and ethnic diversity of its many peoples. One of those peoples included individuals who identified themselves by a variety of names: Ruthenians, Rusnaks, Carpatho-Russians, Lemkos, Byzantines, or simply Slavish. It seemed that this people of many names was worthy of being known not only to themselves but also to the larger American polity of which they were a part.

With this in mind, a few scholars and church activists began to meet in the early 1970s, in order to discuss ways to promote a greater awareness about Carpatho-Rusyns. The result of those discussions were conferences on Carpatho-Rusyns held in 1973 at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh and in 1974 at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Of particular importance in galvanizing community interest in the subject was a two-day Seminar on Carpatho-Ruthenia held in August 1975 at the Basilian Sisters Convent of Mount St. Macrina near Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Over 200 people heard talks on Carpatho-Rusyn history, literature, language, religion, and art, which were later produced on cassettes that reached thousands of listeners across the country. At the same time that academics were meeting and lecturing on Carpatho-Rusyn topics, popular folk-art culture was being promoted through the creation of several song and dance ensembles in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan led by Jerry Jumba, Jack Poloka, and John Righetti among others.

Symbolically, the first discussions to create a cultural and scholarly organization took place in November 1975 at Concord, Massachusetts, near where "the shot heard round the world" had two hundred years before set off the American Revolution. Among the participants at the Concord and other early meetings were: Professors Andrew D. Perejda (Central Connecticut State College) and Richard Renoff (Nassau Community College); Paul Robert Magocsi and Edward Kasinec, then at Harvard University; and three priests from the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic Eparchy of Pittsburgh—Msgr. Basil Shereghy, Athanasius B. Pekar, OSBM, and Stephen Veselenak, OSB. One result of these meetings was the creation in early 1976 of the Carpatho-Ruthenian Studies Foundation, Inc., based in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, although it soon became clear that this organization was unable to galvanize community interest and financial support for scholarly activity. The American Bicentennial year did see, however, the appearance of the first Rusyn-English phrasebook, *Let's Speak Rusyn*, whose immediate popularity was a clear indication that Americans of Rusyn background wanted to know more about their ancestral heritage and to refresh their memory of a language spoken by their immigrant parents which, if possible, they hoped to pass on to their children.

Convinced that the various activities of the early 1970s reflected a need for greater knowledge about Carpatho-Rusyns, Paul Robert Magocsi and Patricia Krafcik, at the time both associated with Columbia University, decided in 1978 to establish the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center and to publish a small quarterly magazine, the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*. They were assisted by several Rusyn Americans in the New York City metropolitan area, including Orestes Mihaly, then Assistant Attorney General of the State of New York, who still serves as the C-RRC's legal advisor, and Nicholas Benyo, Jr., our accountant.

From distribution facilities in nearby Fairview, New Jersey, the C-RRC began advertising a list of about twenty books and pamphlets in the form of an attractive "Carpathian Passport." Since that time, the C-RRC has offered over sixty titles, dealing with all aspects of Carpatho-Rusyn history and culture in the homeland and abroad. Some titles are published by our center, but most are by leading publishers such as Harvard University Press, the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, University of Pittsburgh Press, University of Toronto Press, University of Washington Press, and Wilhelm Braumüller in Vienna, Austria. Of particular value are the Classics of Carpatho-Rusyn Scholarship, published under the auspices of the C-RRC in the East European Monographs Series of Columbia University Press. Edited by Patricia A. Krafcik and Paul Robert Magocsi, the Classics include translations into English of books by some of the leading Rusyn specialists in the twentieth century, including Pëtr Bogatyrëv, Alexander Bonkáló, Pavlo Markovyč, Maria Mayer, Athanasius B. Pekar, and Aleksei L. Petrov. Seven volumes have already appeared in Classics Series, and in conjunction with our twentieth anniversary three more will appear in the course of 1998.

Publishing high-quality books is one problem, getting such material to the public is yet another. In this regard, the C-RRC has been particularly successful in reaching thousands of Rusyn background as well as individual scholarly specialists and libraries that otherwise might never have had access to information about Carpatho-Rusyns. In 1978, the C-RRC began with a list of 800 supporters. During the past twenty years we have reached directly over 10,000 individuals. Our current list numbers just over 6,000 supporters to whom we do a mailing on average four times a year. The vast majority of our list includes individuals living in the United States, but there are as well about 500 supporters in over 20 countries ranging across the globe from Canada, Iceland, and several European countries to Israel, Taiwan, Australia, and New Zealand.

The results of our consistent advertising are impressive: from 1978 through 1997, we fulfilled 16,447 orders which represented the sale of 34,824 books, articles, and maps. Our best-selling books have been *Our People: Carpatho-Rusyns*

and Their Descendants in North America (5,269), *Let's Speak Rusyn—Bisidujme po-rus'kŷ* (3,580), and *Rusyn Easter Eggs in Eastern Slovakia* (1,934). The success of our sales program is due in large part to the dedication and efficiency of our distribution managers: Anna Magocsi from 1978 to 1990, when the C-RRC was based in Fairview, New Jersey; and Barbara Kopitan Corbiey, since 1990 in Orwell, Vermont, and most recently in Ocala, Florida.



A typical village winter scene from the Carpathian Mountains.

Such exposure to the public has resulted in an on-going dialogue with hundreds of individuals who since 1978 have written the C-RRC, most often with requests to have a birth certificate of an ancestor interpreted or to find a map which indicates the village(s) from where their parents or grandparents emigrated. After the Revolution of 1989 and the fall of Communism, the number of letters from individuals and organizations in the European homeland steadily increased, mostly with requests for copies of our publications. In response to such repeated inquiries for basic information, our center published a large-scale historic map (1996) of all villages where Rusyns ever lived, as well as a 24-page brochure called simply "Carpatho-Rusyns" (1995), which summarized all aspects of the group's past development and present activity. Over 4,500 copies of the English brochure have already been distributed, and in response to requests from the homeland special editions were published (1996) in the official language of each country where Carpatho-Rusyns live: in Hungarian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, and Ukrainian.

Aside from books, articles, and brochures, the C-RRC has also published 80 issues of the quarterly *Carpatho-Rusyn American*. Beginning as an 8-page illustrated newsletter, it expanded in 1987 to a 12-page magazine. During its first decade of existence, the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* was concerned primarily with providing Americans of Rusyn background with information about Carpatho-Rusyn history and traditional culture. The descriptive function of the quarterly publication, which in many ways fulfilled nostalgic longings of individuals cut off geographically and politically from an ancestral homeland, began to change in the late 1980s.

Responding to the fall of Communism and the collapse of the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991, the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* began a systematic coverage of recent events in Europe that included English translations of documents and polemical debates over national identity. In effect, the *C-RA* became the only source for information about the post-1989 Rusyn national revival in *all* European countries where it was taking place. Since that time, the quarterly has been cited in numerous scholarly and popular studies concerned with political change in east-central Europe. The unique role of the *C-RA* as both a source of knowledge and participant in helping to shape the course of political developments has been noted in a recent doctoral dissertation by Jacek Nowak at Jagiellonian University (Cracow, Poland), in which he devotes an entire chapter to how our quarterly has contributed to a crystallization of a distinct Rusyn identity in both the United States and the European homeland.

It is never easy to operate a periodical publication on a voluntary basis, and the task of preparing accurate and engaging editorials and articles as well as keeping up with subscription renewals is a daunting task. That is why the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* has been published from several different places, depending on where the editors and subscription managers have been located. The founding editor, Patricia A. Krafcik, was initially based at Columbia University and the University of Pittsburgh (1978-1984), and when she later returned as editor she carried out the task from Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania and The Evergreen State College at Olympia, Washington. In the intervening years (1985-1988) the *C-RA* was edited by Patricia A. Onufrak (McLean, Virginia), Andrew Kovaly (McKeesport, Pennsylvannia), and John Haluska (Cambridge, Minnesota). The quarterly's imprint has moved across the country with its hard-working business and subscription managers, from the first, Olga Kavochka Mayo in Higham, Massachusetts, to Steve Mallick in North Madison, Ohio; John A. Haluska in Cambridge, Minnesota; and Maryann Sivak in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Finally, in 1995, Jack Figel of Eastern Christian Publications in Fairfax, Virginia took over the production and distribution of the *C-RA* at his own expense. The logistical problems together with the limited number of volunteers able to edit and write have forced the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* to cease publication after the last issue of 1997.

Not long after the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center was established, an Advisory Board was created to seek counsel from a diverse body of Americans of Rusyn background who were well suited to gauge the needs of the various elements within the community. The Advisory Board, with 8 to 10 members at any one time, has met on average once every two years. Among its past and present members have been: the late Peter Baycura (Lyndora, Pennsylvania), Mary Ann Gaschnig (Dracut, Massachusetts), Lawrence A. Goga (Minneapolis, Minnesota), John A. Haluska (Cambridge, Minnesota), Alexander Herenchak (Allentown, New Jersey), Mary Huzinec (New York, New York), Jerry Jumba (McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania), Edward Kasinec (Forest Hills, New York), Andrew Kovaly (McKeesport, Pennsylvania), Patricia A. Krafcik (Olympia, Washington), Steve Mallick (Madison, Ohio), Susyn Mihalasky (Clifton, New Jersey), Orestes J. Mihaly (Armonk, New York), Patricia A. Onufrak (McLean, Virginia), Fred Petro (Greek Catholic Union), Richard Renoff (Garden City, Long Island), John Righetti (Mars, Pennsylvannia), Monsignor Edward V. Rosack (Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic

Archdiocese of Pittsburgh), Protopresbyter John Yurcisin (American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese), and Michael Zarechnak (Washington, D.C.).

Although the C-RRC has never been formally associated with any religious body or fraternal organization, the list of its advisors reveals that we have maintained good relations with a wide number of existing Rusyn-American churches and secular organizations. In the early years, two hierarchs—Metropolitan Stephen Kocisko and Bishop Michael Dudick of the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic Church— were particularly helpful in making it possible for us to publish and distribute some of our books and the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*. Some of our advisors were also instrumental in creating new Rusyn-American organizations and publications that cater more to community-based needs, such as the Rusin Association of Minnesota (established 1983), headed by Lawrence Goga, and the Carpatho-Rusyn Society based in western Pennsylvania (established 1993), headed by John Righetti. The C-RRC continues to work closely with both these organizations in promoting our publications and in supporting cultural activity in the European homeland.

As a non-profit organization, whatever profits the C-RRC realizes have been used to publish new books and to encourage new scholarly activity. Aside from producing and selling publications, the C-RRC has made available several grants. The first of these were travel stipends in 1983 to allow the Rusyn-American choreographers, Jerry Jumba and John Righetti, to study folk dance and traditional music in what was then Soviet Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus'). Since that time, research grants have been awarded to the Lemko-Rusyn scholars from Poland, Olena Duc (1987) and Petro Trochanovskij (1989), and to the former director of the Institute of Carpathian Studies at Užhorod State University, Ivan Pop (1993). Writing grants were awarded to the ethnographer Mykola Mušynka (1983-86) from Prešov, Slovakia; and publication grants to the Rusyn writers from Subcarpathian Rus' in Ukraine, Volodymyr Fedynyšynec' (1994, 1997) and Ivan Petrovci (1996); to the newspapers, *Narodnŷ novynkŷ* in Prešov, Slovakia (1992) and *Podkarpats'ka Rus'* in Užhorod, Ukraine (1994); and to the Society of Friends of Subcarpathian Rus' in Prague, Czech Republic (1996).

The C-RRC has traditionally provided upon request its publications gratis to individuals and institutions in all countries of Europe where Rusyns live. Of particular importance is a microfilm collection of over 50 rare nineteenth- and twentieth-century Rusyn newspapers and journals that we donated in 1995 to the Institute of Rusyn Language and Culture in Prešov, Slovakia and to the Department of Ukrainian and Rusyn Philology of the Bessenyei Pedagogical Institute in Nyíregyháza, Hungary.

The C-RRC has also provided speakers for lectures at the University of Pittsburgh and University of Minnesota, and it has co-sponsored and funded several scholarly conferences: "Carpatho-Rusyn Studies: New Research and New Resources," at the University of Pennsylvania (1986); "The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese," at John Carroll University in Cleveland (1988); "Rusyns and the Revolution of 1989," at the University of Pittsburgh (1990); and the "Persistence of Regional Cultures" session at the IV World Congress of Soviet and East European Studies at Harrogate, England (1990), as well as a conference on the same topic (1991) in four cities—Užhorod (Ukraine), Cracow (Poland), Prešov (Slovakia), and Novi Sad (Yugoslavia). We have also participated on average once every two years at the large annual conventions of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, either with a booth to display our publications or in support of a panel on Carpatho-Rusyn topics.

In conjunction with the post-1989 Rusyn national revival in Europe, our center has worked especially closely with the Rusyn Renaissance Society/Rusyn'ska Obroda in Prešov, Slovakia, with whom we organized the First Congress of the Rusyn Language (1992), a conference on "Rusyns and the Slavic National Revivals" (1994), and a conference in connection with the codification of the Rusyn language in Slovakia (1995). The C-RRC is also a founding member of the World Congress of Rusyns and has played an active role in each of the bi-annual meetings held in Medzilaborce, Slovakia (1991); Krynica, Poland (1993); Ruski Kerestur, Yugoslavia (1995); and Budapest, Hungary (1997).

A few C-RRC initiated projects have been generously supported from financial sources other than our own. These include funds from the following: the Greek Catholic Union—to prepare the second volume of the index to the *Amerikansky russky viestnik*; the Hungarian Research Institute of Canada to publish Alexander Bonkáló's book, *The Rusyns*; Dr. Amalija Fairbanks and others—to create a Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund in the wake of the war in that country; Orestes Mihaly—to publish several issues of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* and to create an endowment for scholarship and research; Steven Chepa—to publish the Polish, Slovak, and Ukrainian editions of the brochure, "Carpatho-Rusyns"; and the Rusin Association and Carpatho-Rusyn Society—to publish the English-language edition of the "Carpatho-Rusyns" brochure. Of particular importance is the annual Aleksander Duchnovyč Prize for the best original work in Rusyn literature judged by an international panel headed by Professor Elaine Rusinko of the University of Maryland. The prize of $1,000, to be awarded annually over a five-year period beginning in 1997, was funded by Steven Chepa of Toronto, Ontario.

As we begin our third decade of existence, it is clear that the work of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center is not over. Despite our best efforts, which have been enhanced in the last few years through our appearance on the Internet, we have still not reached thousands of Americans who remain unaware of the publications that are available about Carpatho-Rusyns. There is also still much work to be done in helping to establish on a firm footing new Rusyn academic and cultural organizations in the European homeland. In the short term, our primary goals are to complete, together with a team of international scholars, a *Concise Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture* (about 1,000 entries), and a Rusyn-English dictionary based on the new literary standard used in Slovakia.

Over the years we have been most grateful that our work has been appreciated by Rusyns in North America and in the European homeland as well as the larger scholarly community interested in east-central Europe. We appreciate the support and encouragement of all who have helped us and benefitted from our work and we pledge to do even better in the years to come.

Paul Robert Magocsi
Toronto, Ontario

RECENT EVENTS

Prešov, Slovakia. On August 25-27, 1997, the first seminar for teachers of the Rusyn language was held in Prešov under the auspices of Slovakia's Ministry of Education. Ten teachers were present to hear lectures on Rusyn language, literature, and folklore by several professors from the University of Prešov, as well as to deal with practical issues concerning language pedagogy by Dr. Vasyl' Jabur, the organizer of the seminar, and by Jan Hryb, a retired teacher and author of two modern Rusyn-language schoolbooks published in 1994, a *Bukvar* (Primer) and *Čitanka pro rusyn'skŷ dity* (Reader for Rusyn Children).

Despite the late date of the preparatory seminar, the first classes to teach Rusyn were started during the 1997-1998 school year in Medzilaborce and in a few other village schools in northeastern Slovakia. Hence, one of the major goals set in 1991 by the Rusyn Renaissance Society (Rusyn'ska Obroda) has been achieved. The next closely-related goal that remains is the establishment of a Department (*katedra*) of Rusyn Language and Culture at the University of Prešov to train teachers and other students interested in Rusyn subjects.

Užhorod, Ukraine. On September 20, 1997, a group of professors, writers, and other cultural activists established in Užhorod, the administrative center of the Transcarpathian oblast, the Rusyn Scholarly and Enlightenment Society (Rusyns'ke naukovo-osvitn'oho tovarystvo). The new society has among its primary goals: (1) to provide objective information about all aspects of Transcarpathia's past and present; (2) to undertake scholarly studies dealing with the history, language, folklore, art, and religious life of Carpatho-Rusyns; and (3) to create a literary standard for the Rusyn language in the region. The society also intends to publish a newspaper and an annual scholarly journal.

This is the first time that respected specialists in the history of Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus') have supported publicly an organization which is intended to promote the Rusyn orientation. Among those active in the new organization are several professors from Užhorod State University, including Eduard Balahuri, Mychajlo Boldyžar, Ivan Hrančak, Ivan Lakatoš, Petro Lyzanec', and Ivan Myhovyč, as well as the belletrists and literary historians Volodymyr Fedynyšynec' and Vasylij Sočka-Boržavyn. Mykola Makara, director of the Institute of Carpathian Studies at the University of Užhorod, was elected chairman of the Rusyn Scholarly and Enlightenment Society. On the occasion of its establishment, a declaration of the society's principles was published under the title, *Naša rusyns'ka pravda* (see the article, **OUR RUSYN TRUTH**, in this issue).

Copenhagen, Denmark. On November 3-10, 1997, the Danish Cultural Institute, which is funded by Denmark's Ministry of Culture, sponsored a week-long series of programs that promoted awareness about Carpatho-Rusyns and also organized a study tour for Rusyns from six countries to learn about how democratic institutions in Denmark function. There were several events during what was billed as the "Week of Rusyn Culture in Denmark."

On November 3, an exhibit of modern Rusyn art was opened at the Gallery Shambala in the heart of Copenhagen's art district, featuring the works of Petro Földessy, Pavel Michalič, Ivan Šafranko, Fedir Vico, and Aleksander Zozuljak. On November 7, at the Filmhuset, the premiere of a documentary film took place, "The Warhol Nation," by the Danish director Jakob Hogel and script writer Tom Trier. Over 200 people were at the premiere, including Josef Keselica, head of the Andy Warhol Pop Art Club in Slovakia, who figures prominently in the documentary. On November 6, Professor Paul Robert Magocsi of the University of Toronto presented a seminar on the recent Rusyn national movement at the Institute for Slavonic Studies at the University Aarhus. On November 7, he lectured on the present and future status of Rusyns at the Center of Minority Studies of the University of Copenhagen.

The study tour included 16 Rusyn cultural activists, scholars, priests, writers, and journalists from Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia. They were provided with informational sessions at Denmark's National Parliament and at town and regional governments, as well as at the office of Greenland affairs, the Danish Writer's Association, and the offices of the ecumenical movement, among other institutions. The group also visited southern Jutland (northern Schleswig) to see how the German minority functions in Denmark, and then went across the border to observe the Danish minority in Germany. In nearby Flensburg, Germany, they were guests of the European Centre for Minority Issues, which proposed holding a conference in Užhorod about national minority questions in Ukraine's Transcarpathian region.

A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

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OUR RUSYN TRUTH

The following text was issued as a "Declaration" on September 20, 1997 in conjunction with the establishment of the Rusyn Scholarly and Enlightenment Society located in Užhorod, the administrative center of the Transcarpathian region (Subcarpathian Rus') of Ukraine.—Editor

Every God-given people, whether large or small, has the right to exist. Every people's wealth is to be found in its unique culture, language, songs, tales, customs, religion, and traditions. Every national culture has the right to be preserved and to develop.

For centuries Carpatho-Rusyns have adapted to the geographic and climatic environment of their homeland. In harmony with nature they have created the economic basis for their existence as well as formed their own spiritual culture. Consequently, these hard-working inhabitants of the Carpathians have developed into a people with its own distinct material and spiritual culture and a national psyche characterized by peacefulness.

The historical roots of the Carpatho-Rusyns go back to the ancient past. As the indigenous inhabitants of the Subcarpathian region, Rusyns live in a geographic area that stretches from the peaks of the High Tatras in the west to Mount Hoverla in the southeast. Over the centuries their numbers have been supplemented by newcomers from East Slavic lands as well as by Germanic, Vlach (Romanian), and Turkish influences.

The ancestors of the Carpatho-Rusyns received Christianity from Saints Cyril and Methodius already in the second half of the ninth century before those missionaries went to the Great Moravian state; in other words, long before the Christianization of Kievan Rus'. Cyril and Methodius, the apostles and evangelizers of the Slavic peoples (including Rusyns), taught a group of our Rusyns who then spread their missionary work in other lands. From Subcarpathia Christianity spread to Moldavia and Walachia. According to the [Russian] church historian E. Golubinskij, it was from our homeland that the grand prince of Kievan Rus', Vladimir/Volodymyr the Great, may have requested missionary priests [ca. 988].

With the arrival of the Magyar tribes at the end of the ninth century and their creation of a state in the Danubian Basin, the Subcarpathian Rusyns together with their neighbors—Slovaks, Croats, Serbs, Romanians—became the object of expansionist tendencies of the Hungarian Kingdom. Until the end of World War I, Rusyns lived in the counties of Abaúj, Borsod, Szepes, Sáros, Zemplén, Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa, and Máramaros in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. Because of their national oppression, social exploitation, and a variety of other reasons, Rusyns were unable to secure control over their own economic life; hence, the efforts of the group's small elite to attain the status of an autonomous state proved to be in vain.

According to the decisions of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the territory inhabited by Rusyns was divided among the newly-created central European states of Romania, Hungary, and Poland. In each of these states Rusyns became a minority, while in Czechoslovakia, where two-thirds of all Rusyns found themselves, they were in theory granted autonomy. But even that theoretical autonomy came to an end in 1939 and was not restored either under the Hungarian occupation [during World War II] or after the unification of Rusyns with Ukraine in the context of the Soviet Union in 1945.

Despite the fact that Rusyns were limited politically and subjected to powerful assimilationist forces led by dominant nationalities of foreign regimes, they did not lose their distinct identity and preserved their age-old culture, customs, traditions, and religious beliefs. At the same time they were exposed to influences from Russians, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, and other Slavic peoples.

Living in various states and under differing regimes—including regimes directed by their two Slavic "brothers" [Russians and Ukrainians]—the Subcarpathian Rusyns have experienced ethnic bleeding, socioeconomic exploitation, and marginalization. Just as a Carpatho-Rusyn identity was being formed, the Russophile and Ukrainophile orientations became particularly influential during the 1920s and 1930s and attracted a significant portion of our local youth and intelligentsia.

Alas, the destruction of our right to self-identity, combined with the loss of moral values, responsibility toward one's own land, and a sense of local distinctiveness—tendencies that began half a century ago [with the onset of the Soviet regime]—continue to this day. The hope that the present democratic regime [of Ukraine] would return confiscated property to its owners or their descendants has not been fulfilled. The so-called privatization program carried out according to "legal norms" has allowed swindlers to become fantastically rich while the indigenous inhabitants have been reduced to the status of an unemployed rootless laboring class that is forced to work "under the table" outside the local region and in foreign lands. Trained specialists are no longer employed in their fields of specialization, while university scholars, teachers, cultural activists, artists, medical personnel, and pensioners all live in poverty-like conditions.

Rusyn culture was formed over the centuries under particular geopolitical conditions. Starting from an Old Rus' linguistic and cultural base, Rusyns borrowed elements from neighboring peoples—Ukrainians, Russians, Slovaks, Poles, Hungarians, Romanians, Germans—and they shared with them their own cultural achievements. The renowned Rusyn professors and scholars, Ivan Orlaj, Mychajlo Baludjans'kyj, Vasyl' Kukol'nyk, Petro Lodij, Andrij Deško, and others, made outstanding contributions [at the outset of the nineteenth century] to scholarship in Russia and to the implementation among all East Slavs of a European system of higher education. At the same time, the talented Slavic scholar Jurij Venelin-Huca made a name for himself in the history of Bulgaria as one of the greatest cultural awakeners of the Bulgarian people. Several highly educated Subcarpathian Rusyns also made successful careers in Ukraine as teachers with European-level qualifications in Kharkiv and L'viv universities.

Rusyn culture may be related to Russian and Ukrainian cultures, but it is not the same. Moreover, Rusyn culture cannot be considered a kind of second-rate component of either Russian or Ukrainian culture. Civilized Rusyns

deeply respect the cultures of other peoples and expect the same in return, in particular toward the Rusyn language.

There are not many languages that can claim to have nearly two dozen grammars, dictionaries, and other instructional manuals. These range from a seventeenth-century catechism (1698) and primer (1699) to the grammars and dictionaries of Arsenij Kocak, Mychal Lučkaj, Ivan Fogaraši, Aleksander Duchnovyč, Kyril Sabov, Ivan Rakovs'kyj, Jevmenij Sabov, Aleksander Mitrak, Laslo Čopej, Mychajlo Vrabel', Avhustyn Vološyn, Ivan Pan'kevyč, and Ivan Harajda.

As paradoxical as it may seem, it is also true that we do not have a single codified literary Rusyn language, even though there are scholarly, publicistic, literary, and theological works written in Rusyn. At the present time alone there are more than ten writers [in Transcarpathia] who publish in Rusyn. And as for those local writers who have forgotten their native tongue, they have never acquired a widespread readership. One might ask how a people such as ours can be proud of a native language with so many foreign borrowings. But isn't that why it is so easy for Rusyns to learn Ukrainian, Russian, Hungarian, Slovak, or Romanian? On the other hand, it is true that not every Magyar, Slovak, Russian, or Ukrainian will learn Rusyn. In the end, Rusyn history, culture, and language have all evolved by integrating or developing in parallel with other peoples.

The Subcarpathian Rusyns, who are the age-old indigenous inhabitants of our region, have peacefully accepted the best spiritual and cultural achievements of neighboring peoples. To this very day Rusyn culture continues to function and develop along the borderland of two civilizations—Eastern and Western. We do not have the right to reproach those among us who for various reasons may have become magyarized, slovakized, polonized, or ukrainianized. We have only one request of them—that they reflect upon who their ancestors were and where their own roots lie.

Civilized societies generally preserve the linguistic, cultural, and ethnographic relics of their past. In our case, we continue to follow the lead of the previous [Soviet] regime that strove to bring everything in line with a common norm. In that context, any interest in the ethnic distinctiveness of Rusyns is assumed [in Ukraine] to be political separation. Our historical past is both wonderful and tragic. Rusyns have never taken up arms on their own behalf, although they have served in the Austrian, Hungarian, Romanian, Czech, Slovak, Polish, Russian, American, Canadian, Belgian, and other armies and legions. At the same time Rusyns have more than once been the object of conflict and "liberation."

Without ever leaving home, some Rusyns have managed to be citizens of three empires and five smaller states. In such conditions, if Rusyns had not learned how to relate in a tolerant manner toward various states and political regimes, they long ago would have disappeared from the face of the earth. In a sense, fate has graciously looked down upon us. Various regimes and foreigners may have come and gone, but the Rusyns have remained. As Volodymyr Fedynyšynec' has written, "Rusyns have always looked contemptuously at newly-arrived and short-term settlers as well as at local mercenaries."

The Subcarpathian Rusyns represent a distinct people. Historically they have been formed under difficult conditions of foreign rule, although they have also experienced periods in which a relatively advanced level of democracy and state-building have been achieved. Today Rusyns live on their own land within the borders of contemporary Ukraine as an ethnic minority, in the same way as Rusyns in Slovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Hungary. This does not mean, however, that Rusyns are in any way opposed to the Transcarpathian Ukrainians, Russians, Slovaks or other peoples who live in their midst. Together they all form a regional part of the population of the entire Ukraine, although it is true that Rusyn culture is a withering flower in the bouquet of peoples who inhabit the country.

In the end, Rusyns want only one thing: that they be recognized as an equal among equals in the multinational polity of Ukraine. Unity through diversity is in the interest of strengthening the Ukrainian state. As a result of the frequent changes in political regimes and national orientations, the Transcarpathians of today have to a certain degree lost their sense of ethnic awareness. National and ethnic apathy is a fact of life for most Transcarpathians. The people are not really interested in their ethnic origins, and ethnonational self-identity no longer has any priority for them. Such ethno-national nihilism, which is only accelerated by the country's present unstable social and political conditions, may soon transform this historic Slavic people into a faceless mass doomed to biological extinction. This is possibly the greatest tragedy that faces us today.

It is conditions such as these that require our urgent attention. The Rusyn Scholarly and Enlightenment Society must try: (1) to redirect the scholarly interests of historians, ethnographers, linguists, literary scholars, sociologists, political scientists, theologians, and representatives of other disciplines toward the study of the history of the Rusyn people from earliest times to the present; (2) to promote awareness of our cultural heritage and the traditional moral values of our people—honesty, dignity, spirituality, responsibility, seriousness, and respect for the law; and (3) to defend the social, economic, and spiritual interests of the Rusyn community as well as the entire population of our region.

Before us stands a difficult but noble task. We must with patience and consistency support and strengthen in our people a sense of their historical memory, help them to feel national pride as a people of central Europe whose sons and daughters in the past and still today have become the pride of scholarly, educational, and political institutions in many capitals of the world, both East and West. History will not forgive us if on the eve of the next millennium the Rusyn people disappear from the ethnic map of central Europe and if their homeland—covered with the blood and tears of generations past—is transformed into a territory inhabited by an ethnically indeterminate mass. The disappearance of any people is an unjust loss for all humanity. Therefore, the basic goal of our organization is to undertake scholarly research in history, ethnography, and the formation of a literary language and to disseminate among our people the truth concerning its dramatic past. Perhaps there will be a better future and that there will develop among the inhabitants living for centuries in their own homeland a distinct people recognized by the whole civilized world.

THE RUSYN LITERARY LANGUAGE IN TRANSCARPATHIA

The following text was presented at the scholarly conference held in connection with the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns in Budapest, May 30, 1997, by Petro Lyzanec', Head of both the Department of Hungarian Studies at Užhorod *State University and the Institute of Hungarian Studies.* —Editor

As participants in the World Congress of Rusyns, we are obliged at this linguistic study session to examine a series of important issues connected with the future of the Rusyn literary language not only in Transcarpathia, but in the entire Carpathian region. I wish to touch on several questions without whose resolution it is impossible to discuss the future of the Rusyn literary language, particularly in Transcarpathia (Ukraine).

My observations may be outlined in five points:

(1) Who are the Rusyns (Rusnaks)? Many books and articles have been written about Rusyns, but there is still a need for accuracy here and now. Such accuracy is hindered by contradictions among scholarly opinions in these various works, not to speak of the political aspect of the Rusyn issue.

I believe the original homeland of the Slavic tribes before the common era [C.E.] was located on both sides of the Carpathian Mountains, including the adjacent lowlands. Sometime in the 4th-6th centuries C.E., changes began to take place. A portion of the Slavic population moved to the east where the East Slavic group was created. Another portion migrated west to form the West Slavs, and yet another relocated to the south and became the South Slavs.



Typical wooden church architecture found in the Carpathian Mountains.

A part of the common Slavic population remained at the epicenter of the original homeland on the territory of the Carpathian lowlands. This group was autochthonous, native to the region, and preserved in its speech many archaic Slavic linguistic features. The carriers of this language formed a conglomerate which came to refer to itself as Rusyn. Their language retained many archaic words, for instance: *besida* (conversation), *bolvan* (blockhead), *horodyna* (wattle-fence), *hrjada* (cross-beam in a ceiling), *husli* (violin), *husljaty* (to play the violin), *dŷnja* (pumpkin), *obolok* (window), *ožica* (spoon), *poludynok* (dinner), *chŷža* (house), *čeljaď* (family), and others.

Archaic lexical borrowings from languages and dialects of populations living in direct contact with the Rusyns also entered into the lexicon of the Rusyn literary language in Transcarpathia, for instance, several Hungarian words: *aršu* (spade, shovel), *bajusŷ* (moustaches), *banovaty* (to be sad), *bekeč* (sleeveless fur vest), *bečelovaty* (to value, respect someone or something), *bosorkanja* (witch, sorceress), *bunda* (fur coat), *varoš* (city, town), *vašar* (market), *hotar* (territory of the village), *gazda* (master), *gombicja* (button), *kabat* (jacket), and many more. Slovak words likewise entered the Rusyn language: *barvinok* (periwinkle), *varkuč* (woman's braid), *hodynka* (clock), *djaka* (desire), *durkaty* (to knock, as on a door), *kocur* (cat), *pec* (stove), and others. And from Romanian came such words as *berbenycja* (wooden container for transporting sheep's milk from the pasture to the village), *porta* (gate), *rumehaty* (to chew—for cows and sheep), *spuza* (ashes), *jaryč* (hedgehog), and others.

(2) The second issue is whether Rusyns in the entire Carpathian region need a single Rusyn literary language. It seems to me that at this stage such a common language is not necessary. The first major task is to create a literary language for each region where Rusyns live. Each of these literary variants should produce a lexicon drawn from archaic Slavic words and word combinations that are characteristic for Rusyn, rather than from the language of the surrounding environment. This process will gradually help the Rusyn variants from different regions draw closer to each other and in the future will lead to the creation of a single literary language for all Rusyns.

(3) What should the literary Rusyn language be in Transcarpathia? Much has been written about the fact that Rusyns in Transcarpathia had their own literary language already from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That was not true then and is not true now, for the language in the works of Andrella, Duchnovyč, Mitrak, Sabov, and others was a "high," "elite" language with a great many Old Slavic, Church Slavonic, and Russian words, as well as many borrowings from various other languages. The ordinary people did not understand this language.

A Rusyn literary language for this region should use the central Transcarpathian dialects (Maramoroš and in part Boržava) as a foundation, and from there develop a conception of the literary language with phonetic, morphological, word-forming, and syntactical norms. It is essential, first of all, to take into consideration the great amount of factographic material about this central dialectical group which we already have, to carry out extensive audio taping of the language, to begin to compile a definitive dictionary and

grammar, as well as to devise an orthography. Should we employ in this literary language elements from Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, and other neighboring languages? Yes, we must, but not to excess. The most important thing in the creation of a Rusyn language is the production of good literary works, as well as newspapers and journals. It is essential that this archaic and beautiful language gradually win the hearts of the people so that they, especially the youth, will love it. Only in this way can the language come to occupy its proper place.

Should the question of introducing the Rusyn literary language into schools in Transcarpathia be raised now? I do not think so. The language first must be created on a serious common base, and only after this can we go further. I see no problem with the native Rusyn language of Transcarpathia being studied alongside Ukrainian, the official state language. I am quite certain that any self-respecting democratic nation-state ought to be proud that within its borders live representatives of other nationalities and ethnic groups that have their own languages. Such nation-states ought to create all the necessary conditions for the development of these groups. Only then will political intrigues and national and ethnic dissension dissolve. The presence of a variety of cultures and languages within the boundaries of one nation-state constitutes its real wealth. Moreover, such a country becomes attractive to other nation-states and their peoples, since a variety of national or ethnic groups does not in any way hinder states from having an official national language.

(4) None of these issues about which I have spoken should at this stage be confused with politics or be decided on a political level. At this point all these questions should be resolved in a scholarly and culturally enlightened manner. This means less talk and more work.

(5) For the successful undertaking of these above-mentioned measures, we must be tolerant toward all national and ethnic groups, and not curse or taunt our critics, but rather ground our thoughts and actions in solid scholarship. What are the things we must do first?

a. Create a competent commission to devise norms for a Rusyn literary language for Transcarpathia.

b. Support talented writers and poets who have mastery over the Transcarpathian (central-Carpathian) dialect in the publication of their works in Rusyn. For this purpose it would be useful to create an international "Fund for the Rusyn Literary Language."

c. Create a Rusyn-language journal which would contain interesting material about the native land, its culture, architecture, and history, and to publish in it also proverbs, sayings, and jokes in Rusyn.

d. To assure that the commission for defining linguistic norms of the Rusyn literary language maintain on-going contacts with scholars elsewhere who are competent in these issues, and to publish articles about the principle questions involved in the creation of a Rusyn literary language and the description of its orthographic norms. People should engage more in the reading of works in Rusyn, for only in this way can we count on their support.

Petro Lyzanec'
Užhorod, Ukraine

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS RECOGNIZES CARPATHO-RUSYNS

Responding to the political, socioeconomic, and cultural changes that since 1989 have taken place in east-central Europe and the former Soviet Union, the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. has introduced several new subject categories that reflect more correctly the content of the books and other published materials it currently receives. In December 1996, the library introduced two distinct subject categories: Carpatho-Rusyn Language, and Carpatho-Rusyn Literature.

Previously, Rusyn dictionaries, grammars, or studies about the Rusyn language were classified under Ukrainian dialects. Similarly, works of literature written in Rusyn and studies about Rusyn literature were classified among Ukrainian-language authors and histories of Ukrainian literature, or grouped together as a category of Ukrainian regional literature. Now, books about Rusyn language and literature as well as literary works by individual Rusyn authors have their own subject classification and call number range: PG 3990-PG 3990.95.

According to internal Library of Congress documentation, the decision to implement the new subject classifications was based on recently published information from *The Times Guide to the Peoples of Europe* (London, 1994); from Paul Robert Magocsi's "A New Slavic Language for a Distinct Slavic People" (1995), in which the newly-codified Rusyn language of Slovakia is described; and from his report to the library (1995) about the "Carpatho-Rusyn national revival in all countries where they live," about the "efforts . . . to create a standard Carpatho-Rusyn literary language," and the existence today of "Rusyn-language newspapers, journals, and books."

The new classification scheme will have a wide-ranging impact, since virtually every library in the United States and Canada follows the Library of Congress system and receives from that institution standard data for its own cataloguing procedures. Put another way, the Carpatho-Rusyn language and its literature are now recognized as part of an international cataloguing system, so that in the future all libraries in North America—from the largest research institutions to the smallest local library—will be able to have a Carpatho-Rusyn section. This is but another example of how the larger world has come to recognize Carpatho-Rusyns as a distinct people and culture.



A Carpathian Mountain farmhouse and storage building.

Uesca, Spain. On July 24-27, 1997, the International Association for the Defense of Threatened Languages and Cultures, a non-governmental organization made up primarily of Romance-speaking peoples in Europe, held its 18th Congress at Uesca, in the Aragon region of Spain. As part of its deliberations, the association issued a special resolution in defense of the Carpatho-Rusyns living in Transcarpathia (Ruthènes d'Ukraine), calling on the government of Ukraine to live up to the principles of the European Charter on Human Rights and to allow Rusyns to identify themselves as belonging to a distinct nationality.

L'viv, Ukraine. On August 8-10, 1997, the World Federation of Lemkos held its second congress. The federation is comprised of organizations from Canada, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, and the United States which support the idea that Carpatho-Rusyns (Lemkos) are a branch of the Ukrainian nationality. In consideration of its orientation and active rejection of the view that Carpatho-Rusyns are a distinct people, this body changed its name to: the World Federation of Ukrainian Lemko Organizations (Svitova Federacija Ukrajins'kych Lemkivs'kych Ob'jednan').

The long-time "patriarch" of Lemko studies during the post-World War II period, the Ukrainian-oriented Ivan Krasovs'kyj, criticized the name change, because it implies that the federation will no longer speak on behalf of all Lemkos, but only those of Ukrainian orientation. He also argued that "treating Rusyn political activists as hated enemies is clearly a mistaken position." (*Visty z Ukrajiny*, Kiev, September 25, 1997, p. 4)

Kiev, Ukraine. On August 21-24, 1997, the Second World Forum of Ukrainians met in the capital of Ukraine. Its goal was to review the work of the Ukrainian World Coordinating Council comprised of Ukrainian political and cultural organizations from 43 countries. The president of Ukraine, Leonid Kučma, opened the event at which there were 650 delegates and over 1,000 guests.

The Second World Forum issued a special "Appeal to Rusyns Worldwide." It praised all who preserve the Rusyn name, but warned against those "anti-Ukrainian forces throughout the world which at present try to convince you that you are part of a separate Slavic people not linked to the Ukrainian people." The document concluded with a call to all "Brother Rusyns! Your ancestors always turned toward the eastern Rus'-Ukraine, which they considered to be their homeland and their future. We [the Second World Forum of Ukrainians] hope that you will follow in the footsteps of your ancestors." (*Visty z Ukrajiny*, Kiev, September 25, 1997, p. 4)

The delegation of Rusyn-Ukrainians from Slovakia, which was responsible for preparing the "Appeal to Rusyns," also took the opportunity while in Kiev to interview Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hennadij Udovenko, and to ask his opinion about the "problem of political Rusynism." Udovenko's response struck a note of tolerance. "In the course of my work abroad, I have met frequently with Rusyns. They have numerous organizations which hold divergent political views. We must remain clear that there is a Ukrainian nation (*nacija*) and that Rusyns are a part of that nation. If this principle continues to guide us, then we will be able to find a common path. But this will be a gradual process. For this reason I have often said that we must act with tolerance. We cannot simply declare, 'Professor Magocsi is an enemy of Ukrainians,' or use other such phrases. We must engage in a dialogue with Professor Magocsi. I realize that we are not going to change his views, but we must nevertheless adopt a tolerant approach in order to resolve these problems." (*Nove žyttja*, Prešov, August 5, 1997, p. 3)

Užhorod, Ukraine. In September 1997, the initial issue of a Rusyn newspaper appeared in Subcarpathian Rus' (Transcarpathia). Called *Rusyns'ka bysida* (The Rusyn Language), it is the first paper in the region to appear entirely in the Rusyn language according to the central dialect of Transcarpathia in the form used by its editor, the popular Rusyn poet, Ivan Petrovcij, as well as in the new grammar of the Rusyn language for Subcarpathian Rus' by Ihor Kerča and Stepan Popovyč. According to the subtitle on the masthead, *Rusyns'ka bysida* is a "people's newspaper" dedicated "to the brotherhood of true Rusyns."

The first issue includes an editorial statement; the famous poem by the nineteenth-century national awakener, Aleksander Duchnovyč, *Ja Rusyn bŷl, jes'm i budu*; short news items on recent political and cultural events in all countries where Rusyns live; and an extensive interview with the Yugoslav Rusyn poet and publisher, Natalija Dudaš. The second issue which appeared in October features interviews with the grammarian and poet, Ihor Kerča (pseudonym Slavko Slobodan), and with Agata Pilatová, the Rusyn-born Czech journalist and activist in the Society of Friends of Subcarpathian Rus' in Prague.

It is not clear how often the newspaper will appear. For further information and copies, write: Ivan Petrovcij, *Rusyns'ka bysida*, vul. Divočka 9/8, Užhorod 294015 UKRAINE.

Munich, Germany. The Society of Rusyns in Germany (Deutsche-Ruthenische Freundschaft), founded in 1995, issued in the fall of 1997 the inaugural issue of a periodical bulletin, *Picha Rusnacoch/Trost Ruthenen*. Roughly translated as *Pride of the Rusyns*, the new publication is intended to reflect its title, that is, to encourage Rusyns living in Germany to remain aware and proud of their distinct national heritage and language.

Picha Rusnacoch is written primarily in Vojvodinian Rusyn, since the organization it represents is made up almost exclusively of recent Rusyn immigrants to Germany from the Vojvodina (historic Bačka) in Yugoslavia/Serbia. Announcements of current events are in German. The attractive first issue, with illustrations in color, was prepared for the Society of Rusyns in Germany by Ljubomir Medješi, former director of Ruske Slovo Publishers in Yugoslavia.

Užhorod, Ukraine. On October 12, 1997, a monumental statue of the nineteenth-century "national awakener of the Carpatho-Rusyn people," Aleksander Duchnovyč, was unveiled in front of the Transcarpathian Theater along the banks of the Už River in Užhorod, the administrative center of Ukraine's Transcarpathian oblast (historic Subcarpathian Rus'). Over a thousand people from all parts of the region were present at what turned out to be a public expression of Rusyn patriotism. Plans to erect such a statue go back to

1990, and its final erection was in large part due to the financial support of the current major of Užhorod, Serhij Ratušnjak.

Participating in the opening ceremonies were the sculptor who created the statue, Mychajlo Belen', the city major Ratušnjak, representatives of the regional (oblast) administration, and the head of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns, Professor Ivan Turjanycja. The statue was blessed by priests from the Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches, and all present, led by the cathedral choir and a high school children's chorus, sang the Ukrainian state anthem and the Rusyn national anthem based on Duchnovyč's poem, "Subcarpathian Rusyns, Arise from Your Deep Slumber."

Copenhagen, Denmark. On November 8, 1997, the Danish Cultural Institute held at its headquarters in the capital of Denmark an international colloquium, "Rusyn Minorities in East Central Europe." The colloquium was designed to bring diplomatic representatives from each country where Rusyns live as an indigenous population together with cultural activists in order to inform the Danish and western European public about the fate of Rusyns today.

The program began with an introductory talk, "A New Slavic Nationality: The Rusyns of East Central Europe," by Professor Paul Robert Magocsi of the University of Toronto. Then followed hour-long sessions devoted to each country in which Rusyns live. These began with an official statement from the country's diplomatic mission in Denmark followed by a statement by the head of the Rusyn organization representing that country in the World Congress of Rusyns. Among the speakers were: for Poland—First Secretary and Cultural Attaché Bogusława Sochańska, and Andrej Kopča of the Lemko Association; for Slovakia—Chargé d'Affaires Ivan Surkoš, and Vasyl' Turok of the Rusyn Renassance Society; for Hungary—Consular Otto Róna, and Gabriel Hattinger of the Organization of Rusyns in Hungary; for Ukraine—Chargé d'Affaires Vasyl' Yakovenko, and Ivan Turjanycja of the Society of Subcarpathian Rusyns; for Romania—Ambassador Grete Tartier Tabaraşi, and Pavlo Romanjuk of the Rusyn Society of Romania; and for Yugoslavia—Chargé d'Affaires Marija Djordjević, and Michal Varga of the Ruska Matka.

The formal presentations were followed in each session by a lively discussion with the audience of nearly 100 people comprised mainly of Danish governmental officials, journalists, professors, and students from the University of Copenhagen. Despite his acceptance to be included in the program, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Ukraine informed the organizers at the last moment that he was unable to attend, but that he would send subsequently a written statement. This news, as later commented on in the Danish press, was greeted with surprise and dismay by many present, since the status of Rusyns is the most problematic in Ukraine, the only country that does not recognize them as a distinct nationality.

The official languages at the international colloquium were English and Rusyn, and a bi-lingual publication of the proceedings is being prepared by Tom Trier, the scholar from the University of Copenhagen who was responsible for organizing the colloquium.

Užhorod, Ukraine. On April 27, 1998, the World Council of Rusyns (Svitova Rada Rusyniv) met under the direction of its chairman, Vasyl' Turok, to discuss concrete plans for the Fifth World Congress of Rusyns. The congress is to be held in May 1999 in Užhorod, the administrative center of Ukraine's Transcarpathian oblast and the cultural capital of historic Subcarpathian Rus'. The members of the World Council also met with Ivan V. Ivančo, chairman of the Transcarpathian Regional Parliament (Oblastna Rada), to whom they submitted a formal request to hold the next world congress in Užhorod.

Chairman Ivančo responded favorably to the request, although he indicated that the final decision about the Fifth World Congress being held in Užhorod rests with the Ukrainian government in Kiev. At the Užhorod meeting, each member of the World Council described the status of Rusyns within their respective countries. This was the first time any official from Ukraine received a delegation from the World Congress of Rusyns.



Подкарпатскіи русины,
Оставте глубокій сон!
Александер ДУХНОВИЧ

За братство истинных русинов

Русинська бисіда

Народна новинка

Рочник 1
Число 1
сектембер 1997

ЦИТАТА НОМЕРА: *"Дай, боже, обы и у нас найшли и понаходилися писателі, котрі учинят нам литературу и настане литературный язык, коли граматикознавцы щи свважатися будут".*
ЕДЕН СОКЫРНИЦЬКЫЙ СИРОХМАН, авать РУСИНСЬКЫЙ АКАДЕМИК АНТОНИЙ ГОДИНКА.

РУСИНСЬКЫЙ ИНТЕРЙЕР В УКРАЙИНСЬКОМУ ЕКСТЕРЙЕРІ

Милі читалникы "Русинськоі бисіды"!
У первых рятках первого номера нашоі с Вами новинкы вламуєме Вам: "Слава Йосу Христу!" а

Айбо што нам до урагів чужинськых, кой майме доста и своіх.
И туйкы физичесськы зримо стойить перет очима страшноє слово: ЕТНОБІЗНЕС. Хотів бым кровльов написати сисе слово:ЕТНОБІЗНЕС. Ба в котрому кругови дантового ада мавуть быти тоты, тко у сись по-страшному ковдоськый час чинить собі копіку на националнів ідейи ?! На русинськів националнів ідейи.
Тоты говгірі, котрых нам провокативно путсунули на руководящі позиції в русинськів организації, ни упустили за сисі сім годів ани єдиної книшкы по-русиньскы. А тым, тко хотів тото робити, як лем могли, мішали. Дись колись упущали якусь новинку, айбо из-за свої малограмотности писали до ний лем по-вкрайинськы, вать по-руськы.
И вшытко сисе в днишньів атмосфирі, кой офіциялні новинкы Края, а с ними радійо й тиливізор кить дись и упомняить слово "русин", та лем

Александер ДУХНОВИЧ
ВРУЧАНІЄ

Masthead from the first issue of the *Rusyn'ska bysida* (Užhorod), September 1997.

AN INVALUABLE SERVICE

It was a humble and quiet beginning when a friendly newsletter magazine called the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* was published in September of 1978. I remember the first bright green issue that came in my mailbox. Oh, what information! Finally, our local Carpatho-Rusyn ensemble, Slavjane, could find more Rusyn allies. In those days, we had some difficulty with Slovak and Ukrainian nationalism in our local Pittsburgh area community. To say that we were Carpatho-Rusyn in our performances and displays was met with considerable negativity and protest. It was a frightening experience that we had to deal with repeatedly. The *C-RA* had articulate information of merit, and provided a connection for us to a larger Rusyn community with a healthy sense of self-identity and esteem, as well as to a world view that did not deny itself its resolve to have a bright future to enjoy its Rusyn heritage.

What a joy it was to receive the *C-RA* and participate in its current event reportage. The *C-RA*, with a congenial intellectual resonance attributable to collaborators Magocsi and Krafcik, was stimulating and connected Rusyns who believed in pursuing the blessings of continual education and development of Rusyn culture! In isolated Rusyn-American communities, the future looked like it would only offer the continued isolation of American Rusyns—with a kind of subdued minimalism in local development.

With the birth of the *C-RA* came the birth of a post-factionalist Rusyn intellectual civility and kindness of high moral example, a sense of strength in unity of Rusyns everywhere, and a level of high academic achievement through the communication of knowledge for beneficial culture building in people. Those who came on board the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center's activities, with its official publication, the *C-RA*, worked selflessly and with great empathy for the betterment of Rusyns, and shared a driving internal force to grow and to heal a special ethno-civilization that had taken a beating but was not defeated.

The *C-RA* had an academic way of embracing and delivering the goodness of the whole package of Rusyn cultural literacy. It prompted Rusyns to see the need to arrive at a level of functional cultural maturity. Furthermore, the *C-RA* had a way of attitudinally embracing and sharing the hope and faith that propelled us beyond what could be immediately perceived as possible to achieve. The *C-RA* had taken on straightaway the challenge to awaken the majority of American Rusyns who had unceremoniously drifted into a dense fog about the essential cultural literacy of their Rusyn heritage. The history, the geography, the religion, the beautiful traditions, the art, the crafts, the chant, the folk art music, the dance, the embroideries and more, had become—during four, five, or six decades of American life—experiential pockets and pieces of culture that were unconnected, like most people were unconnected to a direct and larger life experience of their Carpatho-Rusyn heritage.

In those days, and throughout its twenty years, the *C-RA* successfully made connective progress among factionalized Rusyn-American leaders. With potent educational information, the *C-RA* faced leaders who were losing their sense of strength and cooperation in the larger Rusyn comunity, and who were quietly moving into a sense of diminishment. Rusyn-American leaders were existing not only in a large degree of isolation from each other, but also with an unresolved chaotic sense of how to speak their Carpatho-Rusyn name to the American society around us. For several decades, it was a very disturbing experience to hear speakers or to read articles that repeatedly opened with a nervous ambivalent statement something like this: "Among our Uhro-Rusin, Carpatho-Rusin, Carpatho-Ruthenian, or Carpatho-Russian people, there is the favorite custom and tradition of...." It is a daunting personal experience to explain repeatedly to our fellow Americans that an American Carpatho-Rusyn has a variety of competing names and a fragmented community. It was an embarrassing situation that many people avoided by not saying anything. The *C-RA* was graciously dispassionate, but positively involved in setting the Carpatho-Rusyn nomenclature in place by virtue of its all-embracing historical continuity from the past to the present. Its academic work was exceedingly practical. It put the Rusyn identity problem in a clearer perspective and helped to create a sweeping new level of Rusyn cooperation that was sorely needed for American Rusyns, and for Rusyns in Europe.

The academic publications of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center added awareness and momentum to the European Rusyn recovery from the communist era into the new post-communist times. With the collaborative guidance of long-time *C-RA* Editor Patricia Krafcik, and the prolific historical and current event writings of Paul R. Magocsi, as well as the courageous academic-minded staff of the C-RRC founders and board-members, a heritage of a numerically small people without a country, without the political and jurisdictional tools of cultural and economic self-determination, undergoing "ethnic cleansing" of their Rusyn identity, and a far-reaching assimilation process by the surrounding national cultures had begun to breath, live, and give birth to more self-esteem and self-determination. The *C-RA*—with its freedom of speech—said with clarity that Carpatho-Rusyns existed and that it was worthy to speak about their presence, the integrity of their culture, and their human and cultural value in a larger world.

In 1975 there was an important Carpatho-Rusyn seminar at Mt. St. Macrina in Uniontown. It was chaired by Professor Magocsi, included several speakers, and was co-sponsored by the Sisters of St. Basil the Great. This seminar was a great discovery. Its proceedings encouraged the establishment of the C-RRC and its newsletter magazine, the *C-RA*. This had far-reaching positive consequences in the lives of many Rusyns. In 1994, one of those far-reaching successes included the emergence of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society with its *New Rusyn Times* newsletter magazine, whose growing ranks of active membership can be attributed in large measure to the great formative work so ably completed by the *C-RA*. Many thanks to the editors, associate editors, researchers, and reporters of the *C-RA* who labored out of love. Many people were touched and transformed by this goodness. The twenty years of *C-RA* issues continue to serve as valuable information for understanding the nature of the Rusyn heritage. Rusyns and Slavic studies programs everywhere will continue to benefit from what you have done.

Jerry Jumba
McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania

FINDING MY CARPATHO-RUSYN ROOTS

We invited Jack Figel, our business manager and publisher in the past few years, to share his roots saga with our readers in this last issue. Like many others, Jack has served C-RA *generously and professionally, and deserves great thanks. What he describes here is truly symbolic of the experience of so many of us in the past twenty years.*—Editor

In 1984, I embarked on a somewhat unusual vacation trip to Europe. I intended to spend a full week in Eastern Slovakia searching for relatives of my grandparents who came from the region known at one time as Zemplin County, near the city of Prešov.

I flew first to Vienna—the furthest east I could get by commercial flight at the time—rented a car, and set out driving toward Bratislava. In those days, the communists were in strict control of travel in and out of Czechoslovakia, and although I had all my papers and visa in order from the embassy in Washington, the border crossing took more than an hour. After negotiating the streets of Bratislava with the primitive map I had, I found my way to the main highway across Slovakia and headed for Prešov.

Arriving in Prešov on a Saturday evening, I checked into the main hotel in the center of the city, the Dukla, which I discovered later that night was directly across the street from the Greek Catholic Cathedral. Finding the times for services the next morning, I attended the Divine Liturgy that was sung by the cathedral choir in Church Slavonic. I felt right at home, just like in my parish back in Duquesne, Pennsylvania. There were very few young people or children present. The church was filled with elderly "bubbas" in the multicolored but dark head scarves all sitting on the left side, while the "dzedos" were all in dark suits sitting very quietly on the right side. I sat down and took a few pictures—as many as I dared—during the liturgy.

After church, I got into my rental car and headed out of town on the only road which went north and east, toward the town of Stropkov. I remember finding the village of Šandal, from which my mother's father said he came, on a detailed map in the library of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City. It was outside the town of Stropkov, and I decided to begin my search there. I had no complete roadmap of Slovakia at the time, and just followed the road northeast. After about 10 miles, I found a turnoff that was marked for Stropkov, and 15 miles later I entered Stropkov. In the middle of town, there was a sign pointing to the left into the hills for the village of Šandal. I couldn't believe my eyes. I had found it!



The Orthodox Church in the town of Stropkov, now in the hands of the Greek Catholics.



The village of Šandal as viewed from the cemetery.

Getting more and more excited, I headed up the hill and five minutes later found the village—about 20 houses, a church, cemetery, small community building, and surrounded by co-op farmland. After driving all the way through, I found a short road that went to the side of town and up a hill to the cemetery. I walked around, feeling a great reverence, and after a few minutes discovered the family name of my mother, Kačur, on one of the memorials. The grave was for Michal Kačur who was born the same year as my grandfather, who had said he came from this same village. I knew this was more than just coincidence.

Not able to speak much of the language—only a few folk songs that my grandfather had taught me, and the hymns and prayers I knew as a cantor in church—I went back into Stropkov to see what else I could find. I drove down the main street and quickly found the church with the three-bar cross on it. Going up to it, I discovered a prayer service being celebrated (it was about 3:30 p.m. on a Sunday afternoon) and I waited patiently until it was over. I approached the priest and asked if he spoke English. He replied "a little" and we slowly tried to find out if he knew a Kačur family in Šandal. He said he did, and he offered to take me there right then. We climbed into his two-seat East German auto and went "put-put" up the hill back to the village. He also was the priest for the parish there, and went once a week to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. He was Greek Catholic, but shared the church in Stropkov with the Orthodox, who were recognized by the government at the time.

He knew the Kačurs lived in the village, but wasn't sure of their house number. We stopped an old woman on the street, he asked her which was the Kačur house, and we drove up to it. No one answered our knocks on the front door, but we heard voices around the back. We walked around and there were about a dozen people sitting on the grass and talking in the warm sunshine. The priest interrupted them and tried to explain that I might be a relative from America.



Greek Catholic church in the village of Šandal.

At first they were very shy and did not believe him. I could tell they seemed reluctant to cooperate and so I started singing the folksongs in the local Rusyn language that my grandfather had taught me. They immediately recognized the words and melody, and then readily accepted me as a distant cousin.

The "patriarch" of the family, Michal Kačur, was not there at the time, and so we made arrangements for me to meet him and his brother Petro and the priest at the church in Stropkov the next day. I departed Šandal and drove back to Prešov with a feeling of accomplishment that I had at least found some contact with my mother's family.

The next day, at the agreed time, I met Michal Kačur, his brother, the priest, and a Jewish friend of theirs, Mr. Greenfield. Mr. Greenfield had learned English from American soldiers during World War II and spoke it better than the priest. He acted as interpreter for the rest of my visit. We went to the local hotel and restaurant in Stropkov and I learned that Michal Kačur was indeed the manager of the local co-op farm and also ran the hotel. He was the party leader of the area and a somewhat important individual. We ate lunch in a private room in the back, with large portions of haluški and halupki and generous glasses of vodka.

After lunch we drove up to the village and met with the rest of the family and spent the day and well into the evening talking and learning about each other's families. Michal Kačur was the eldest son of the Michal Kačur whose gravesite I had found in the cemetery, and his father was also Michal Kačur (1869-1919). That Michal Kačur had a brother, Juraj, who went to America in the late nineteenth century. Although we couldn not get a complete confirmation, I believe that this Juraj Kačur was the same Juraj (George) Katchur who was my grandfather's father, emigrated to America, and settled in Western Pennsylvania to work in the coal mines. His son John later moved to Duquesne, Pennsylvania, worked in the steel mills there, and was my grandfather.

The family invited me to stay with them for the rest of my trip and so I spent the next few nights sleeping on their couch which converted into a fairly comfortable bed. The older couple, Michal and his wife Anna, slept in one bedroom while their youngest daughter Emilia and her husband Andrej slept in the other with their two young daughters, Emilia and Lenka.

The next day we all met Mr. Greenfield again in Stropkov, and headed southeast toward Vranov to find the village of Yestreb where my father's father said he had been born. In searching the maps, I discovered there were three Yestrebs (also Yastrabie) in eastern Slovakia, but decided to head for the closest one since it was the easiest and quickest to find.

This one was outside Vranov near the Toplov River. On the main street we stopped and asked a woman coming out of the village market if she knew the Figel family. She said yes, but said they lived in the next village called Čaklov. We drove there and asked around for the Figel house. We were directed to the end house of the main street and there found a lanky, white-haired man cutting the tall grass in the front yard with a long scythe. We pulled in the drive and Mr. Greenfield explained who I was and that I was looking for any Figels in the area.

The man was Stefan Figel, father of four sons and a daughter. His youngest son, Ján, was away in the Army but Ján's wife and daughters lived in the house next to his. We spent a few hours talking, thanks to Mr. Greenfield's interpreting, and found that Stefan Figel was the son of another Ján Figel who died in 1956, and whose father was Michal Figel. Michal had a brother named Ján who went to America in the late nineteenth century. I have an Uncle Mike, too.

On my father's side of the family, my grandfather's father was Ján (John) Figel who emigrated with his young son John to the U.S. in the 1890s. Again, the coincidence seemed to good too be true, so I believe I found the same cousin relationship with this side of my family. We didn't stay with the Figels long, but long enough to find my family roots and get mailing addresses for future correspondence.

Not only did I find the family name in the villages where my grandfathers said they came from, but the two men I met had the exact same facial features and body shape as my two grandfathers—they must have been from the same families!

We returned to Šandal, and then the next day I headed back to Vienna and home to America.



My cousins—Stefan Figel on the left and Michal Kačur on the right. Both are now deceased. Vičnaja jim pamjat'.

I returned again in 1986 and spent more time with both families, especially the Figels. Like me, Stefan Figel's youngest son, Ján, was an engineer relatively fluent in English. His job at tha time was to translate technical documents about telephones from English into Slovak for the local phone company. In 1986 he and I spent a full week exploring more villages and finding more relatives with my grandmothers' maiden names—Lazor and Malasko—and also looking for more Figels and Kačurs.

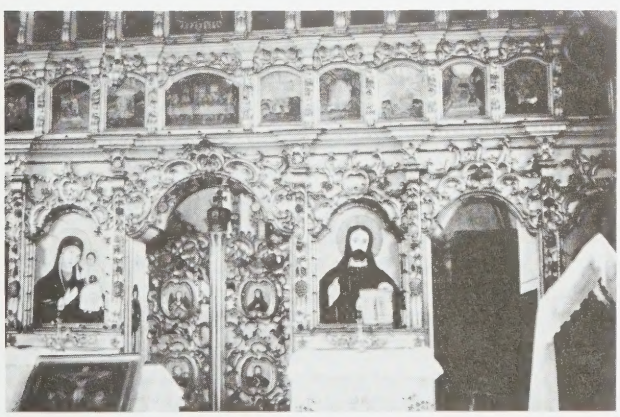
Over the years, I have kept in touch with these first contacts that I made in Slovakia. I visited again in 1996 to find them living in much improved conditions. In fact, my cousin Ján Figel is now a member of the Slovak Parliament in Bratislava, representing the Vranov district. He has been to the United States on business a few times, and even studied at Georgetown University for several months in foreign affairs and economics on a U.S. funded scholarship program.

I am most thankful that I have found my roots in the Carpatho-Rusyn region of eastern Slovakia. With this final issue of the *C-RA*, I am proud to relate my story and I encourage anyone else who wants to find their ancestors. The exploration and adventure are well worth the investment of time and energy. And even though driving under machine-gun turrets across "no-man's-land" in 1984 was a somewhat anxious moment during my first trip, it has been worth it!

Jack Figel
Fairfax, Virginia



Icon screen of the Orthodox Church in Stropkov in 1984 (now relocated in a new Orthodox Church building).



Icon screen of the Greek Catholic Church in Šandal in 1984 (now in a museum near Svidník).

A FOND FAREWELL

The following letters have been received from readers regarding this last issue of the Carpatho-Rusyn American.—Editor

Dear Editor,

No one likes to see the end of something that is meaningful. And yet, I think one of the key indicators of the maturation of the Carpatho-Rusyn American community is that now we are concentrating our growing resources in different areas so that our community can achieve what it needs to achieve culturally both in this nation and internationally.

Therefore, it is with mixed emotion that I write to you in this, the last issue of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*. I reflect on the incredible work of this publication. At a time when there were no English-language periodicals devoted to educating people about Carpatho-Rusyns, our cultural development, and our history, the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* was that one glimmering star—a star that led truly thousands to a richer and fuller understanding of their Rusyn heritage.

Even more so, the *C-RA* raised the issue of Rusyns on an international scale and made us a viable entity worth study and discussion—in essence, laying the first groundwork for what we have now achieved as a people throughout most of the world in which we live. We ARE a people, one with a rich culture every bit as valid as any other culture on the face of the earth.

I remember our early days at *C-RA*. At that time I was writing for the publication with some regularity and served for a brief period as its associate editor. I remember the struggles of pulling together a publication that served such a vital purpose with very limited resources. When I think back on this, I especially commend you, Bob, and you, Pat, for your unfailing commitment and effort for 20 years in assuring that this beacon was there for us.

Like a beacon, the *C-RA* has led the Rusyn community to "find land." We now have an increased awareness of Rusyns worldwide. We have dramatically growing numbers of Rusyn Americans who have rediscovered their Rusyn heritage and are becoming increasingly involved in celebrating and manifesting it. You and your efforts were a precursor, and in many ways the motivator for the creation of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society, our first national "grass roots" organization for people of all backgrounds and religions interested in assuring a future for Rusyn culture in America. Our membership is fast approaching 1,000!

So now, there are many of us involved in Rusyn cultural efforts, when once there were few. It is time for us to use our community resources to their utmost—and that is what is happening now. The continuing need for a periodical focused on educating the public and "our own" about Rusyn culture, history and events can clearly be met by the Carpatho-Rusyn Society's membership newsletter, *The New Rusyn Times*. This allows the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center to concentrate its efforts where they will be most productive for our community—the publication of research materials and books which will assure an existence for our people for all eternity.

I don't see the end of the *C-RA* as a sad moment in our history. I see it as a time when we have recognized how best to use our resources as a community to achieve our ends. We would never have reached this point were it not for the growing numbers of people involved in assuring a future for Rusyn culture. Thank you for being there, *C-RA*, when we needed you most. Thank you for having the wisdom to know when it was time to make a change.

John S. Righetti
President, Carpatho-Rusyn Society
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Dear Editor,

With disappointment, yet with a sense of profound gratitude, I wish to convey my appreciation to the editorial staff, past and present, upon the conclusion of the publication of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American.* For twenty years this publication has set the standard for periodicals which enable Rusyn Americans to rediscover the value of their heritage. But it is so much more than just a periodical; it is an essential resource for Rusyn scholars, writers, and anyone seeking information about the accomplishments of our people. I recall in years past how eagerly I awaited every issue, which inevitably provided hours of pure learning about the wondrous kaleidoscope of Rusyn life in America and in our ancestral homeland.

The crumbling of communism provided the *C-RA* with a new mission—to be *the* chronicle for the revival and flourishing of the Rusyn people. The editorial staff rose to this challenge admirably: the *C-RA* quickly became the single best source for the latest in Rusyn-related developments in East Central Europe. And through this reporting, Rusyn Americans and Rusyn Canadians have been inspired to reinvigorate our cultural and organizational life.

I am honored to have been among the contributors to this fine publication over the past few years. While the need for a full-fledged academic journal about Rusyns now becomes even more urgent with the conclusion of the *C-RA,* as the editor of another Rusyn publication I will strive to carry on in your tradition of accurate reporting, absorbing writing, and celebrating the dignity and talents of our people wherever they may live.

Richard D. Custer
Editor, *The New Rusyn Times*
Washington, D.C.

Dear Editor,

As the curtain comes down on the publication, *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, we all unfortunately will be affected. This newsletter was truly a remarkable event in our history. It was more than a publication. It was in effect the rebirth of our people.

Each issue contained so much information that was read and re-read again. Then it was trussed into a special place for times of future reference of which there were many. The strict adherence to academic style notwithstanding, 20 years of the *C-RA*'s reaching out to those of us who hungered for its contents were never disappointing. This newsletter became our "base."

But alas, as life itself, all things must end. As we move on however, I, as will my people here in the twin cities area and elsewhere will always remember the education that we received, the history of who we are. The true value of the *CR-A* will be judged by what we do with this information and knowledge in the future. Can we sustain this revival? To do so we must all play a part.

I want to thank all of those who contributed to the past 20 years of publication. They and Bob Magocsi are to be congratulated on a job well done. "Ja Rusin byl, jesim i budu!"

Lawrence Goga
President, Rusin Association
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Editor,

The first seven paragraphs of your editorial in the Fall 1997 issue of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* were so positive about the cultural program at the Fourth World Congress of Rusyns that I was at first surprised and then saddened to read the last two sections. To think that after 20 years, 80 quarterly issues, with nearly 1,000 pages of priceless information, the *C-RA* will cease publication!

When you started to put out your "Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Heritage" there really was very little available in English beyond Professor Paul Robert Magocsi's book, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, and occasional material in the little known English language journal *Diakonia* (which deals with Eastern Christianity). One really needed to know Polish, Russian, Slovak, Rusyn, Ukrainian, and Hungarian to find anything about the Eastern Slavs of the Carpathian mountains of central Europe. The educated North American Rusyn descendant had nowhere to turn for information about the homeland. Then along came the *C-RA* with its wonderful vignettes, short biographies, historical essays, cultural comments and pictures, many of which I came across in no other source.

It always was a pleasure to find the latest copy of the quarterly in my mail tray when I sorted through it, and I always put the *C-RA* on the top of my required reading pile. Certainly I will greatly miss the *C-RA* both personally and professionally. I'm sorry to see it disappear.

Paul J. Best
Southern Connecticut University
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Editor,

Until I read Bob Magocsi's *The Shaping of a National Identity* (1978), I wasn't sure how to answer questions about the origin of my name. I would say "Russian," but Russians wondered if it might be Georgian. I am now happy to identify myself as a Carpatho-Rusyn.

My mother's church school diploma (from the Russian Orthodox parish in Passaic, New Jersey), spelled her name—Wilhousky (Vil'hovska)—as Ol'ovskaja, reflecting a Russocentric bias, but I learned, via a *C-RA* contact, that the church was founded less than twenty years earlier by my own grandfather, among others, as a Greek Catholic parish. It later switched its allegiance to Russian Orthodoxy—for reasons I learned about from Magocsi's book!

By the time I got interested in my parents' and grandparents' origins, it was too late to ask them. But I have been able to fill in the gaps in my people's history with the help of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center publications, including the *C-RA* newsletter. I'll miss it. Many thanks to the volunteers who produced the *C-RA* for 20 many years!

Lawrence P. Chvany
Watertown, Massachusetts

Dear Editor,

For twenty years the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, published by the C-RRC, has been the voice of the spirit of "our People." It is a voice that has been well received and recognized by academia in the Americas and in Europe.

Approximately 150 years have elapsed since that spirit was first expressed in the capitols of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.Those who have since attempted to still the voices of the Rusyn spirit for political and religious reasons have not been successful. That spirit will continue in the future by other means and other ways in a technologically changing world.

Throughout our history we have witnessed the power and influence of the written word and how it has played an important role in the awakening of our national identity. So too has the *C-RA* played an extraordinary role in the awakening of Rusyns in America to the existence of their precious ethnic spirit. We commend your efforts and the efforts of Professor Magocsi and others in the publication of the *C-RA*. We have learned the history of our people from its pages, and are now at a point where all the pieces of our ethnic puzzle finally fit together. We now understand who we are and turn to yet another generation to continue to nurture and preserve this spirit into the next millennium. *Na mnohaja lita!*

Orestes J. Mihaly
Armonk, New York

Dear Editor,

I'll miss the *C-RA's* capsule coverage of Rusyns in all "flavors," but I agree it's time to move on. The field of Carpatho-Rusyn studies has matured to the point that it now outstrips what even the most dedicated volunteers can keep up with. I hope the excellent publication program of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center will make up for the loss of the newsletter by making available an annual "Digest" of interesting materials, continuing the even-handed and inclusive tradition of the pioneering *C-RA*.

Catherine V. Chvany
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Editor,

"Glory, glory, hallelujah, mashed potatoes and cibula!" I recall the moment when psychologist Patrick White took to the podium at the first meeting of Pittsburgh's Carpatho-Rusyn Society in 1994 and regaled the audience with these lyrics to an old song from his youth as he spoke of the compelling yet fragmentary nature of the evidence that eventually led him to the discovery of his own rich Rusyn heritage.

How many of us began our own journey toward encountering our Rusyn backgrounds and the larger Rusyn world around us with information every bit as compelling and fragmentary as his?

Most of us, I dare say. And what filled in the missing details and led us to the eventual understanding that many of us share today with our brothers, sisters, and friends across the ocean—that Rusyn identity is a viable reality that deserves as much respect and attention as that of any other ethno-linguistic community, despite the often oblique nature of its own articulation and the many factors that often obscure it? Certainly, the *C-RA* and the work and dedication of its editors, contributors, and readers have occupied a central role in disseminating information on Rusyn identity, in opening up dialogue on its problematics, and in giving us a forum in which to explore ourselves and our global community.

I have entertained the idea of compiling a collection of narratives from Rusyn Americans on the themes, "How I found out that I was of Rusyn descent," and "How I became active in Rusyn cultural life." I wager that the *C-RA* would figure prominently in virtually everyone's story, as it does in my own.

The *C-RA* has consistently responded both to the authoritative needs of the scholarly community and to the Rusyn-American public's desire for needed educational materials and news on Rusyns, Rusyn culture, and Rusyn studies in North America and Europe. I share in my colleagues' satisfaction for having contributed to this process. If we accept that there is much enrichment to be gained through an exploration of Rusyn studies and heritage issues and the experience of a living Rusyn culture, then the *C-RA* has been for many of us a map to a treasure trove, and its editors, contributors, and supporters have been its cartographers.

In both personal and social histories, especially those involving the kind of conficts and pluropotentialities endemic to the Rusyn experience, intolerant and oppressive writings and ideas can be like guns that keep on firing long after the hails of bullets and tiresome polemics have ceased. Conversely, tolerant and objective writings and fresh ideas stressing free inquiry and openness—like those found on the pages of the *C-RA*—can continue to educate, illuminate, and endure long after publication. The free discussion of the idea of Rusyn identity and the kinds of writings featured in the *C-RA* have attracted the lasting attention of so many Rusyn Americans precisely *because they explain so much and answer so many unanswered questions* in a way unmatched by other forms and avenues of discourse.

In this respect, the *C-RA* has shared much in common with the goals of the Rusyn press in Europe, insofar as both have endeavored to give marginalized Rusyns and Rusyn culture a voice on their own terms appropriate to the needs and circumstances of the people about whom they are written. To the *C-RA's* continued influence, and to those who have helped make it a success, I offer the sincere wish, *mnohaja i blahaja Vam lita!*

Robert Carl Metyl'
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



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